

The Oppression of Women in Maman Suherman's *Re* and Nawal El

Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*: A Comparative Study

A Graduating Paper

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By:

Hidayatus Sholihah

19101050079

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SUNAN KALIJAGA

YOGYAKARTA

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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduate paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researchers' opinions or findings included in this research are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, June 16, 2023
The researcher



Hidayatus Sholihah

Student ID: 19101050079

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA

Jl. Marsda Adi Sucipto, Yogyakarta, 55281, Telp./Fax. (0274) 513949
Web: <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> Email: adab@uin-suka.ac.id

NOTA DINAS

Hal: Skripsi
a.n. Hidayatus Sholihah

Yth.
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
UIN Sunan Kalijaga
Di Yogyakarta

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Setelah memeriksa, meneliti, dan memberikan arahan untuk perbaikan atas skripsi saudara:

Nama : Hidayatus Sholihah
NIM : 19101050079
Prodi : Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
Judul : **The Oppression of Women in Maman Suherman's Re and Nawal El Saadawi's Woman at Point Zero: A Comparative Study**


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Yogyakarta, 16/06/2023
Pembimbing

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA


Dr. Witriani, S.S. M.Hum.
NIP: 19720801 200604 2 002



PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR

Nomor : B-1124/Un.02/DA/PP.00.9/07/2023

Tugas Akhir dengan judul : The Oppresion of Women in Maman Suherman's Re and Nawal El Saadawi's Woman at Point Zero: A Comparative Study

yang dipersiapkan dan disusun oleh:

Nama : HIDAYATUS SHOLIAH
Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : 19101050079
Telah diujikan pada : Jumat, 07 Juli 2023
Nilai ujian Tugas Akhir : A-

dinyatakan telah diterima oleh Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

TIM UJIAN TUGAS AKHIR



Ketua Sidang
Dr. Witriani, S.S. M.Hum.
SIGNED

Valid ID: 64c37ab6aebc2



Penguji I
Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, SS., MA
SIGNED

Valid ID: 64c3bf3f6c7cc



Penguji II
Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum
SIGNED

Valid ID: 64c3998b5dc75



Yogyakarta, 07 Juli 2023
UIN Sunan Kalijaga
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
Prof. Dr. Muhammad Wildan, M.A.
SIGNED

Valid ID: 64c73fab04e10

MOTTO

“A Woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.”

-Virginia Woolf-



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YOGYAKARTA

DEDICATION

This graduate paper is dedicated to my beloved mother, Mrs. Hartini, and my beloved father, Mr. Ya'kub (who has passed away). Your love and affection will never die. I hope that someday we will be reunited in heaven of the Almighty.



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STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA

Yogyakarta, June 16, 2023
The researcher



Hidayatus Sholihah

Student ID: 19101050079

THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN IN MAMAN SUHERMAN'S *RE* AND NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S *WOMAN AT POINT ZERO*: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

By: Hidayatus Sholihah

ABSTRACT

The oppression of women is a worldwide phenomenon that remains unresolved. One of the reasons why women are oppressed is because of the patriarchal culture. Patriarchal culture upholds the gender gap in society, so the patriarchal culture creates a phenomenon of toxic masculinity where men are considered superior and powerful. Hence, women are always in second place. Women are the losers because they do not have the same freedoms and rights to life as men. When women want to fight for the value of their lives, they are seen as out of nature and as rebels, so they have to accept oppression and violence because they try to get out of the shackles of patriarchy. Re from the novel *Re*:, an Indonesian woman, and Firdaus from the novel *Woman at Point Zero*, an Egyptian woman, are examples of women who resist. These two women experienced oppression and violence from society because they fought for a decent life. Based on the radical feminist point of view, this study found three main problems resulting from the patriarchy that harm Re and Firdaus: women are born without freedom in determining the direction of life, women cannot fight, and selling women through prostitution, where the root of the oppression they experience is gender. The rules of patriarchy are a source of injustice and losses that Re and Firdaus have to accept as women with weak social and economic status. The researcher found that the two women from different countries experienced the same oppression due to patriarchal culture. Using a literary comparison technique, this study was able to describe the impact of future trauma that Re and Firdaus had to experience due to the bullying they had experienced since childhood. The research shows that regardless of the country's background, women are still creatures vulnerable to oppression because of the effects of gender inequality created by patriarchal culture.

Keywords: *Women's oppression, Patriarchy, Gender, Radical feminism, Comparative literature*

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ABSTRAK

Penindasan terhadap perempuan adalah fenomena di dunia yang masih tidak dapat terselesaikan. Salah satu penyebab perempuan mengalami penindasan adalah karena adanya budaya patriarki. Budaya patriarki menjunjung tinggi kesenjangan gender yang ada pada masyarakat, sehingga menciptakan sebuah fenomena maskulinitas beracun yang beranggapan bahwa keberadaan laki-laki lebih tinggi dan berkuasa, sehingga keberadaan perempuan selalu pada barisan kedua. Perempuan menjadi pihak yang dirugikan, karena tidak memiliki kebebasan dan hak hidup yang sama seperti laki-laki. Ketika para perempuan ingin melawan dan memperjuangkan kelayakan hidupnya, perempuan dianggap keluar dari kodratnya dan di *judge* sebagai pemberontak, sehingga harus menerima penindasan dan kekerasan karena mencoba keluar dari belenggu patriarki. Re dari novel *Re*;, perempuan berkewarganegaraan Indonesia, dan Firdaus dari novel *Woman at Point Zero*, perempuan berkewarganegaraan Mesir, adalah contoh dari perempuan yang melawan, kedua perempuan ini mengalami penindasan dan kekerasan dari masyarakat karena memperjuangkan kehidupan yang layak. Berdasarkan sudut pandang feminis radikal, penelitian ini menemukan tiga masalah utama akibat dari patriarki yang merugikan Re dan Firdaus, yaitu perempuan terlahir tidak memiliki kebebasan dalam menentukan arah hidup, perempuan tidak memiliki kemampuan melawan, dan penjualan perempuan melalui prostitusi, dimana akar dari penindasan yang dialami oleh mereka adalah gender. Peraturan yang ada pada budaya patriarki adalah sumber dari ketidakadilan dan kerugian yang harus diterima Re dan Firdaus sebagai perempuan yang lemah secara kedudukan sosial dan status ekonomi. Peneliti menemukan bahwa dua perempuan dari kedua negara yang berbeda ini mengalami penindasan yang sama akibat dari budaya patriarki. Dengan menggunakan teknik perbandingan sastra, penelitian ini mampu menjabarkan dampak trauma masa depan yang harus dialami oleh Re dan Firdaus akibat dari penindasan yang mereka alami dari masa kecil. Penelitian yang dilakukan menunjukkan bahwa terlepas dari latar belakang negara, nyatanya perempuan masih menjadi makhluk yang rentan tertindas karena efek dari ketidakadilan gender yang diciptakan oleh budaya patriarki.

Kata kunci: *Penindasan perempuan, Patriarki, Gender, Feminis radikal, Perbandingan sastra*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature is a work of fiction with a beautiful sentence structure written by someone based on that person's imagination. One example of a literary work is a novel. Novels are divided into various genres. Genres serve as benchmarks and differentiators. According to Scholes (1984), the novel genre is based on the fact that stories are divided into fiction and non-fiction. Fiction novels are written based on events that never existed, the reports in them are made purely based on the author's imagination. Then, non-fiction novels are written based on actual events that have existed or happened, the story is based on facts, and it could be the author's own experience or someone else's experience retold by the author.

Novels that deal with social and cultural issues surrounding real life always have a charm for some people. One example of a socio-cultural problem in the world that still has no common ground is gender inequality. Gender roles have distinguished the character of women and men. Women are considered feminists, and men are considered masculine. This character is then embodied in psychological characteristics, such as men considered dashing, strong, brave, etc. Conversely, women are considered soft, weak, obedient, etc. There is nothing wrong with that distinction. But, certain parties abuse gender differences. These parties are people who live in a patriarchal culture.

According to Walby (2014), Patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices that assumes men are dominant, repressive, and exploitative towards women. Patriarchy is called culture because it is passed down from generation to generation. Some country has a patriarchal culture, although the degree of attachment varies. Patriarchal culture makes men feel superior to women. The assumption that women are weak is interpreted as the reason women are treated arbitrarily, often leading to acts of oppression. Patriarchy assumes that women only have reproductive functions and are considered only to be able to stay at home to get pregnant, give birth, take care of children, or just do household chores. This stigma is referred to as one of the oppressions against women.

According to Lengermann and Niebrugge in their book entitled: *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830-1930* (1998), women's oppression has been described as a result of direct power relationships between men and women, in which men are fundamental and specific to controlling and exploiting women. This relationship in which men (the ruler) succeeds in making the woman (the subordinate) an instrument of the ruler's will and refuses to recognize the independence of the subordinate. Women's oppression was often found in ancient society until today. According to Gilman, women who do not have social and economic status are more vulnerable to becoming victims because they have less power and dignity and can not defend themselves (1898).

In this research, the researcher will focus on two non-fiction novels. The first novel is written based on someone else's experience, retold by the author entitled *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi, an English novel translated

from Arabic, written in 1975, and published in Arabic in 1977. The novel is based on Saadawi's meeting with a female prisoner in Qanatir Prison named Firdaus, a woman sentenced to death by the state for killing a man. Firdaus has agreed to tell her life story before her execution. This novel tells the story of Firdaus, who tells the twists and turns of her life from her childhood in the village until she became a high-class prostitute in the city of Cairo.

The second novel is based on the author's experience, entitled *Re:* by Maman Suherman, an Indonesian novel written in 2014 and published in 2016. This novel tells of a student majoring in *Criminology* named Herman, who is working on his final paper and makes the prostitution profession the object of his research. Because of that, he meets Re, a prostitute who was originally only the object of his research and eventually became his best friend. This novel tells about Re, the lesbian prostitute. Re's winding life story drags Herman into the dark side of the world of prostitution.

This research is focused on women characters who have essential roles in the novels: *Firdaus* and *Re*. In the novel *Woman at Point Zero*, Firdaus is a woman who lives in a small village in Egypt. Egypt is one of the countries with a thick patriarchal culture where the gap in rights due to gender differences is very high. Firdaus was born into a poor and patriarchal family. Her life as a daughter consisted of working in the field and washing her father's feet every night. Firdaus had no choice and should have enjoyed her childhood as a woman who had to carry out her nature according to existing customs.

As a teenager, Firdaus had many things forced upon her, from forced circumcision to forced marriage. It is shown in the paragraph: “Firdaus has grown, your holiness, and must be married. It is risky for her to continue without a husband. She is a good girl, but the world is full of bastards” (Saadawi, 1983, p. 36). In this novel, Firdaus was born and lived only to serve men. As a child, she had to serve her father, and then as an adult, she had to get married and serve her husband. Firdaus arranged to marry a wealthy old widower who was stingy and often abused.

Firdaus is tired of the suffering she goes through from childhood to adulthood. Filled with her realization and great courage, she decided to run away from her abusive husband, cut ties with her family and start her new life. But, Firdaus' life anguish is increasingly felt. As an ordinary woman who runs away from home, it means deliberately going to hell. When she started living alone, Firdaus experienced a lot of abuse, starting from foreign men who used her as a woman who had to serve him in the household without being married, lied to by law enforcement officials who threatened her with prison if she didn't want to have sex with them for free, even from a woman who uses Firdaus's innocence for her gain. The novel tells how Firdaus was tormented by the oppression she experienced because she was born a woman with less power and living in a patriarchal culture in Egypt.

The second female character from the other novel is Re. Re is a woman who was born into a respectable family in Indonesia. It is told in the novel that her

family has a culture that significantly preserves the honour of the family name. It is shown in the paragraph:

“Sampai akhirnya, tiba-tiba saja ibu Re mengaku kepada Nini bahwa ia tengah mengandung. Keluarga ningrat itu pun gempar. Nini amat malu sekaligus takut kalau Aki akan murka bila mengetahuinya.” (Suherman, 2021, p. 63).

“Until finally, Re's mother suddenly confessed to Nini that she was pregnant. The noble family was in an uproar. Nini was both embarrassed and afraid that Aki would be angry if she found out.” (Suherman, 2021, p. 63).

As like told in the paragraph, Re born as a child without a father, her mother became pregnant when she was not married. The grandmother was very angry with her and wanted to kill Re, who was still in her stomach. The grandmother was afraid of being considered a failure to educate her daughter for getting pregnant out of wedlock and tarnishing the family's good name.

Fortunately, the grandfather refused to kill Re's fetus because the grandfather wanted to have grandchildren. Finally, the grandmother lets her daughter carry the baby without getting married. The grandmother obeys her husband's words, even to things she disagrees with. It is evidenced in the paragraph:

“Seperti kebiasaan di kalangan keluarga ningrat, perempuan tak punya hak untuk membantah apa yang di fatwakan suaminya. Meskipun marah dan tidak setuju, Nini hanya bisa menerima apapun keputusan Aki. Termasuk pula ketika Aki dengan santainya berkali-kali bilang sudah menikah lagi. Beberapa di antara istri muda nya bahkan pernah dibawa ke rumah dan diperkenalkan kepada Nini.” (Suherman, 2021, p. 75).

"As is customary among noble families, a woman has no right to argue with her husband. Despite her anger and disagreement, Nini could only accept whatever Aki decided. Including when Aki casually mentioned that he had remarried many times. Some of his young wives have even been brought to the house and introduced to Nini." (Suherman, 2021, p. 75).

The grandmother is portrayed as very obedient to her husband. She will do anything to serve her husband, even sacrificing herself. The grandfather has complete power in the family. The grandmother willingly submits to her husband and gives up her ego for him. But as it turned out, Re was the real victim of the grandfather's unilateral decision to give birth to Re without listening to his wife's consideration. The grandmother did not like Re's presence. To her, Re is still an illegitimate child born without a father, Re is considered a family disgrace, and she often hurls swear words about illegitimate children at Re.

The conflict erupts when Re becomes a teenager and begins to fall in love. She has a relationship with her schoolmate and her private tutor. Re becomes pregnant without knowing who the fetus's father in her womb is, whether her classmate at school or her private tutor. She feared that her grandmother would find out she was pregnant out of wedlock. She was afraid that her grandmother would scold her and could not imagine what would happen to her if her grandmother found out that she was pregnant. Her mother and grandfather had died, and no one could protect her. Therefore, Re decided to run away from home.

Re's life disaster escalated. When starting a new life from scratch on the streets, she accidentally meets an unknown woman named Mami Lani, who promises to save her and her daughter in her womb. Mami Lani, who initially thought she was an angel sent by God for Re, turns out to be a monster. Mami

Lani sells Re's body by force. Re became one of Mami Lani's prostitutes because her beautiful face made many guests want to sleep with her. Mami Lani manipulated Re into a lesbian prostitute because lesbian prostitutes are more expensive than ordinary prostitutes. Re can serve female customers even during menstruation. This means that lesbian prostitutes have more work hours and earn more than regular prostitutes. Thus, Re became Mami Lani's money machine.

As a prostitute, Re experienced a lot of harassment, such as being unable to refuse the wishes of customers who played their sex roughly and journalists threatening to publish her identity as a prostitute if they did not provide free sex services. Re, who initially wanted to start a new life and live happily with her child, instead had to live the rest of her life just to become Mami Lani's prostitute. Her beloved daughter was raised by someone else. Even throughout Re's life, the daughter did not know that Re was her biological mother because Re did not want her daughter to know that her mother was a despicable prostitute.

Firdaus and Re, the main characters in these two novels, have complex lives. Their lives are complicated and full of twists and turns. Firdaus is a victim of the patriarchal culture practised by her family, aided by the religious and cultural legitimacy of her country, while Re is a victim of the toxic family that gave birth to her. The poor communication and relationship between her grandparents resulted in Re's fate for the rest of her life. The common fate of life in childhood that they cannot choose is to be born into a toxic family that makes them have to throw themselves away and start a new life from scratch in the outside world, separated from their families at a very young age, wading through

life on the streets that make them both trapped in the world of prostitution which is very cruel and full of wounds.

Firdaus's background of being raised in a patriarchal family and Re's being raised in a family where she was born as an unwanted grandchild resulted in the equation that they became women who were less empowered and vulnerable to oppression and violence. They have no power and strength to fight for a decent life. In the end, both women leave the shackles of their families and struggle to choose their own path in life, which is not much different from the violence and oppression they must endure. Both novels tell the story of women's winding, complex, and bloody journeys, the revenge and tears of the two main characters.

Based on the similarities in the life storylines of the two female characters, finally, in this research, the researcher analyzes the oppression experienced by female characters in the novels *Re* by Maman Suherman and *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi using radical feminist theory. Feminism influences many patterns in women's lives. Since it was inaugurated as an international women's movement, the study of feminist criticism has become an interesting choice. Feminist thought protects women from the injustice they must accept because of gender inequality.

The analysis aims to find out what kind of oppression and violence is experienced by the characters Firdaus and Re, two female characters who work in the same profession as prostitutes and have the same fate in life but also have slightly different backgrounds. After this research was conducted, the researcher hoped that the public's view of the women involved as prostitutes would not only

be seen from a lousy perspective. Prostitutes have the same rights as other women, and even women are obliged to have the same rights as men. In addition, the researcher also hopes that readers can better understand the suffering and struggles of women who live less fortunate and, in the end, can understand each other better as human beings.

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on the study's background, this paper's research aims to discover the answer to the problem: 'How do women in Maman Suherman's *Re* and Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* experience forms of oppression?'

1.3 Objectives of Study

Based on the problem statement, this research aims to explain how the two main characters in these two novels experience oppression from childhood until death. Furthermore, the researcher will also explain the long-term implications of oppression and violence experienced by women in these two novels.

1.4 Significances of Study

Cases of gender inequality are still an ongoing issue to be discussed worldwide. One form of gender inequality is women's oppression. According to radical feminists, women's oppression is often experienced by women who do not have social and economic status. Social status means people who hold positions in government agencies or come from upper-class families, and economic status means people who are highly paid or, indeed, their lives are filled with sufficient wealth.

In the novel *Woman at Point Zero*, the best social and economic status is fulfilled only by men. Women rarely get the chance to do that. Women are considered inferior and considered unable to live such a life. Patriarchal culture in Egypt teaches the doctrine that men are superior to women. This is what causes men to act as they want. When women want to fight back, they face the selfish masculinity of men who do not want to be defeated. In the novel *Re*., evidence that women with lower economic means are more vulnerable to oppression is that due to social inequality, Re and her fellow prostitutes do not have the power to fight against pimps and people who have a lot of money to pay them. As a result, they receive a lot of oppression in the form of physical violence and mental violence. The researcher hopes that this paper can give an understanding that women of any status have the same rights in their life.

1.5 Literature Review

The researcher uses specific literature reviews related to the novel. The first literature review is research by Fajarika Ramadania, entitled "*Konflik Tokoh Utama dalam Menghadapi Ketidakadilan Gender pada Novel Re: Karya Maman Suherman.*" This journal focused on gender injustice and inner conflict experienced by the characters in the novel, such as describing the problem of gender inequality, expressing the internal conflict that occurs in the character, and describing the formation of the character's personalities with their disputes. This novel also tells the existence of gender injustice perpetrated by fellow women as well as by men, which still often occurs in everyday life, especially in the world of

prostitution, which is often considered the world of glitter by some people when in fact, there are the workers often accept many acts of violence.

The second research is a graduating paper by Nova Yuniar Sari, an alumnus of Airlangga University Surabaya, entitled "*Konflik Batin Tokoh Re dalam Novel Re: Karya Maman Suherman Kajian: Psikologi Sastra.*" This paper focused on conflict and conflict resolution efforts experienced by the character Re in the novel *Re*: by Maman Suherman. This study aims to identify characters and characterizations and relations between characters who interact directly with the character Re and know the inner conflict of the main character Re and efforts to resolve the internal conflict in the main character Re.

The third research is a graduating paper by Rike Dwi Santari, an alumnus of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta, entitled "*The Potrayal Of Firdaus Dilemma in Nawal El-Saadawi's Woman at Point Zero: A Care-focused Feminism Analysis.*" This paper analyzes the efforts made by Firdaus through Carol Gilligan's care-focused feminism. Feminism focusing on care is categorized into three parts: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. The result of the analysis using care-focused feminism on Firdaus' character is that she experiences the dilemma phase. Firdaus experiences the dilemma phase when she enters the conventional stage. The conventional stage in feminism analysis focuses on care. This causes a personality crisis that affects his efforts to fight patriarchy.

The fourth research is titled "*Khitan pada Perempuan Perspektif Nawal El-Saadawi (Kajian Feminisme),*" written by Zikraini Alrah (2021) from Syarif

Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta. This research focused on the law of genital mutilation in women, according to Nawal El Saadawi's seen from a feminist perspective. In this research, there is also a particular chapter that discusses the meaning of feminism according to Nawal El Saadawi. The author also alludes to the issue of feminism seen in the contents of the novel *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal el Saadawi.

The difference between those research and this research is that they focus on problems to be raised. This research focused on the oppression of the main characters, from how they experienced much oppression and violence to the implication for the women in their future because of the oppression. The oppression experienced by the main characters is analyzed with radical feminist theory from their childhood until they finally die.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

Feminist literary theory was born in the early 20th century. Virginia Woolf pioneered it in her book *A Room of One's Own* (1929), which expresses the importance of a woman being financially independent. She also wrote an extended essay entitled *Three Guineas* (1938) about the role of women in politics. Woolf feels that women's political ideas are often not respected. Her inspiring writings have made many feminists make her a role model, especially in feminist criticism in the 1970s. Feminism emerged against the background of gender inequality in society. Gender inequality makes women seem despised and seen only with one eye. That's what causes the emergence of the feminist movement to fight for women to have equal status and rights with men.

In this research, the researcher uses radical feminism, one of the flows of feminism theories. The word radical means down to the roots or back to the source of the problem. According to Kate Millet (1970), the basis of violence and oppression of women is gender. Therefore, radical feminists think that the only way to achieve justice for women is to delete the root of the problem, namely gender. For so long, the male voice has determined the world and life. Ideas, instincts, and female voices should be taken into account in the political arena, the production of knowledge, the circulation of the industrial world, as well as intricacies of research, so women's lives have always become an object determined unilaterally by men. Women are permanently alienated, even to define and give direction to their own lives. It's time women are heard. Listening to women's voices is a must purely from women, not interfered with by views of male sexism.

Based on the categorization of struggle, radical feminism fights against the oppression and exploitation of women in gender social life, especially regarding sexuality, violence, and cultural representation of women. Radical feminism believes that feminine gender identity limits women from developing as whole human beings and considers the main enemy of women to be patriarchy. Radical feminism also believes that apart from patriarchy, men are also part of the emergence of oppression against women. They assume that men control women's sexuality for the satisfaction of men. According to radical feminism, there are several sources of gender inequality:

- a. The system of oppression of women by men (patriarchal system) always discriminates against women.
- b. Men do violence and control women.
- c. Legitimization of the oppression of women through law, religion, and other social institutions.
- d. The objectification of women's bodies through advertisements, mass media, and other industrial productions.
- e. The exploitation of women through pornography and prostitution.

The book entitled *Feminist Thought* (Tong, 2009, p. 49) argues that radical feminism can be seen from 5 things:

- a. Women were historically the first oppressed group.
- b. Women's oppression is the most widespread in virtually every known society.
- c. Women's oppression is the most complicated form of oppression to eradicate and cannot be removed by other social changes, such as the abolition of class society.
- d. Women's oppression causes the most suffering to its victims, qualitatively as well as quantitatively. However, the suffering may often go unrecognized because of the sexist prejudices of the oppressors and the victims.
- e. Women's oppression provides a conceptual model for understanding all other forms of oppression.

From the ten aspects mentioned above, it can be concluded that the oppression of women causes violence that is very dangerous for victims, both qualitatively and quantitatively, even though this misery is not visible due to closure, whether committed by the oppressor or the oppressed because various institutions support the oppression.

Comparative literature is the science of analysis that compares a literary work with other works based on genre, time, author, history, and influence. The comparison shows the two literary works' differences, similarities, interrelationships, and influences. Comparative literature is necessary to find their differences when people read two or more literary works with similar stories. Comparative literature is one of many approaches in the literature. The researcher uses the theory of radical feminism as a central theory benchmark, then uses the technique of comparative literature to unite the novel *Woman at Point Zero* and the novel *Re: in* in answering the questions in the problem statement.

1.7 Method of Research

1.7.1 Type of Research

The researcher uses qualitative research in this paper. Qualitative data is about people's emotions or perceptions and what they feel. In qualitative data, these perceptions and feelings are documented. Unlike quantitative data, which has exact science, qualitative data is more directed toward an opinion.

1.7.2 Data source

There are two types of data to make this paper: primary and secondary. The primary data are obtained from all the novels' words, dialogues, phrases, and

sentences. The primary data sources of the study are *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawaal El Saadawi and *Re* by Maman Suherman. The secondary data are the supporting data taken from literary books, criticism, the internet, and some articles related to the novel. The secondary data of the research are accepted from any information related to the novel from other books and the internet.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

Several steps must be taken to collect data. First, the researcher read the novel *Woman at Point Zero* and the novel *Re*. Second, the researcher re-reads each novel while taking the crucial points needed in the research with the guidelines of radical feminist theory. Third, the researcher will organize the research by sorting the important points based on the research questions, which are divided into two parts according to the title of each novel. Fourth, the researcher makes answers to research questions by making conclusions drawn from the points of similarity between the two novels and making them one with a comparative literature technique.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

The researcher employs descriptive qualitative because all data is conveyed in words and sentences. Descriptive qualitative research employs collecting, describing, classifying, and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusions.

1.8 Paper Organization

This paper consists of four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction, including the background of the study, literature review, theoretical approach,

method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter is a novel's summary and explains the intrinsic elements of the novel *Woman at Point Zero* and *Re:*. The third chapter is the analysis and discussion of the data. The last chapter is a conclusion and suggestion.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part is the conclusion, and the second is a suggestion. The conclusion contains the concluding points related to the problems of women's oppression in two novels: *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi and *Re*: by Maman Suherman, using radical feminist theory, which then applies the comparative approach to both. Some points are from the research findings in the previous chapter. The last is a suggestion, which contains the researcher's suggestion for future researchers who might conduct research using a similar novel, do a similar comparative study, or just focus on one of the novels.

4.1 Conclusion

Oppression and violence against women is an important issue that never ends. Although, over time, there have been many movements fighting for justice and gender equality for women, in some countries, there may still be many women who suffer greatly because they live without proper social status and poor economic status, which makes them more vulnerable to oppression.

Firdaus and Re are examples of women who have to live with injustice. Firdaus experienced physical and mental oppression from men because she was born a woman. Meanwhile, Re experiences oppression and physical violence from her environment because of her low social position and works as a prostitute. The oppression experienced by Firdaus is caused by patriarchy, primarily caused by gender inequality. In contrast, the factor experienced by Re is caused by the

absence of social status and the absence of power. Even though their backgrounds of oppression were somewhat different, they received the same oppression and violence and had similarities in how they tried to rise from adversity.

Radical feminism is a response to fight inequality against patriarchal culture. It can also be a movement of women against exploitation, sexism, and oppression by men. Radical feminism is also a way to build awareness to fight for equal rights between women and men. Radical feminism is a relevant and appropriate literary theory to analyze the oppression experienced by women in the novel *Woman at Point Zero* and the novel *Re: who live under pressure* due to gender inequality and power. Radical feminist theory focuses on and sides with weak women.

The sufferings and struggles of women in the two novels are brought together through a radical feminist perspective so that many similarities are found. Then they concluded by using comparative literary techniques so that the question of the main problem is whether women in the world experience the same suffering as a result of patriarchal culture is answered. Firdaus and Re are inspirational figures for women to live better lives and realize that women are precious beings.

4.2 Suggestion

Woman at Point Zero novel and *Re: novel* tells about the lives of less fortunate women who feel unfair because they were born as women. The researcher uses radical feminist theory and focuses on violence and the struggles experienced by women in it. The researcher applied comparative techniques using two novels with different country backgrounds, that from Egypt and Indonesia,

which in fact. However, they live in different countries but have the same experience of oppression and violence.

Thus, the researcher suggests that the next researchers may apply the comparative study about women's oppression from other countries, maybe Europe and Indonesia. The researcher also suggests the next researchers examine cultural comparisons because there may be many cultural differences between Indonesian and European cultures, ultimately affecting women's struggle to be free from oppression.

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