



GENDER INEQUALITY UNDER NAZI GERMANY DURING WORLD WAR II IN MARTHA HALL KELLY'S LILAC GIRLS NOVEL

Icha Rizky¹, Muhammad Fithratullah²

Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia^{1,2}

icharizky25@gmail.com¹, fithratullah@teknokrat.ac.id²

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Abstract

Gender inequality is a condition that occurs between men and women in family life, society, nation and state. This abstract aims to provide a brief overview of research that explores Martha Hall Kelly's "Lilac Girls" narrative and analyzes gender inequality during the Nazi colonial period. The novel explains feminist actions that focus on gender inequality that occurs in women and men. The author used qualitative descriptive methods to present data analysis in this study. The data is in the form of excerpts and narratives from the novel Lilac Girls that illustrate a relevant research problem, namely gender inequality. This thesis uses a socio-historical approach to see the relationship between literary works and historical elements of society that occurred in the past. Furthermore, this thesis uses Mansour Fakih's theory of gender inequality. The results of the analysis show that the novel Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly clearly describes gender inequality with four strategies by Mansour Fakih as analysis: subordination, stereotypes, marginalization, violence, and double burden; based on the results of the analysis, the novel Lilac Girls which makes a form of gender inequality bias that occurred during World War II which a group of Nazis controlled.

Keywords: Lilac girls, marginalization, nazi colonial, stereotype, violence

INTRODUCTION

Literary art cannot be reduced to words on the page. They are there solely because of their writing skills. As an art, literature can be described as an arrangement of words to provide pleasure. Novels are a medium of communication and expression that uses literary language with expressive aspects that carry the tone and attitude of the author (Fithratullah, 2021). However, through words, literature elevates and transforms experience beyond solely pleasure. Literature is written expression. Literature tries to convey some meaning or idea through texts, messages, and specific purposes (Afrianto, 2017).

Gender refers to cultural differences, products of social conditioning (Quinn, 2006, p. 162). Inequality indicates a lack of fairness or balance between different groups or individuals. Gender inequality refers to the unequal treatment or perception of individuals based on gender, stemming from social differences attributed to male, female, and non-binary identities. This leads to an uneven distribution of resources and opportunities (Ridgeway, 2011). This widespread problem is observed in education, employment, leadership roles, health care, and decision-making processes. Social norms, stereotypes, and discrimination perpetuate it. Stereotypes are feminine actions that are not too synonymous with women and men.

Gender inequality is still a significant problem in the United States today. Studies show that progress toward gender equality in the workplace has slowed since the 1990s (Ridgeway, 2011, p. 15). In addition, America is a country that has a considerable level of gender inequality, such as the problem of differences in one's skin color (Kasih, 2018). The current gender gap is not just a remnant of the past that will disappear independently. Instead, they exist because competing forces are at play. Some keep inequality alive, while others try to reduce it. So, the differences we see today result from the ongoing battle between these conflicting factors.

Since 1848, women have fought for civil, social, political, and religious rights through declarations of sentiment. In 1911, International Women's Day commemorated the role of women in World War I and resulted in voting and labor rights for them, which were strengthened in 1920. The movement also fights violence and discrimination against women in medicine. UN Women notes that discrimination and violence against women persist in society despite progress. During the Nazi era, women were confronted with patriarchal views that promoted housewifery, although many women became involved in the workforce when men went to war (Lorke,

2020). However, they often receive lower recognition and compensation. The Nazi regime also implemented compulsory sterilization of women. Women's experiences vary, with some supporting the regime, while others experiencing oppression and cruelty, predominantly Jewish and non-Jewish women who were victims of the Holocaust and Nazi war crimes.

Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly (2016) is a gripping historical novel set during World War II, primarily within the confines of Ravensbrück, a Nazi concentration camp for women. It follows three main characters: Caroline, a socialite turned volunteer at Ravensbrück, who discovers the camp's horrific experiments; Herta, an ambitious doctor who becomes entangled in these cruel experiments; and Kasia, a Polish teenager whose dreams of becoming a doctor are shattered as she endures the horrors of Ravensbrück. The novel highlights the immense suffering and brutality within the camp, serving as a poignant reminder of the Holocaust's atrocities. Ravensbrück imprisoned women from various backgrounds, many of whom perished due to the camp's inhumane conditions.

The purpose of the study was to see the reflection of gender inequality under Nazi Germany during World War II in the *Lilac Girls* novel. It applied gender inequality theory using a socio-historical approach that is expected to find new things in research. It focused on gender inequality and forms of gender inequality such as subordination, stereotypes, marginalization, violence, and double burden, to see more specifically at the research can be seen from the novel *Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender inequality is a theory that addresses inequality between men and women that is used as an approach to research or literary studies, this theory is used by the author in this study. There are several studies that have used the same theory as the authors did. The first research was conducted by Ning Mugiyah (2011) with the title *Reflection of Women in The Land of Invisible Women Novel By Qanta A. Ahmed MD*. In this thesis she used Feminist Theory. In this study, he discussed the influence of the social environment and to find out the characterization of the main character Qanta A. Ahmed to see the condition of inequality between women and men. The implication of this study is to provide an overview of the fact of *The Lost Arabia Women* as can be seen by using feminist theory and the characteristics of the main characters to support her research. From her research on feminism and the characteristics of the main character, the author can use it as a reference to support the author so that this analysis is useful.

The second study was conducted by Nurul Istikomah (2015) entitled *Women's Attitudes Towards Gender Discrimination in Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*. In this thesis she used Feminist Literary Criticism, in this study, she discussed the types of Gender Discrimination and women's attitudes in novels. In this study, it can be seen how Nana and Mariam's role in fighting to end discrimination and oppression against women. to support this research using the Patriarchy Theory approach to conduct analysis by deepening research using Gender Discrimination theory for its research. From this study, the authors use it as a reference to support this useful analysis.

The third study was conducted by Berliana Ayu (2019) entitled *The Impact of Gender Inequality on Women as Reflected in George Gissing's The Odd Women*. In this thesis he used the Theory of Intrinsic Elements and Extrinsic Elements. In this study, she also discusses the influence of gender inequality on women and women's resistance to inequality through thoughts of women's character actions. to support this research using the Gender Inequality approach to determine the forms of gender inequality and their impact in novel research. From this study, the author uses it as a reference to support the author's research so that this analysis can be developed.

The fourth research was conducted by Anisa Gita Cahyaningtyas (2022) entitled *The Struggle For Gender Equality Reflected in Bombshell (2019) Movie By Jay Roach: A Feminist Perspective*. In this thesis she used Liberal feminist theory. In this study, she also discusses the portrayal of the struggle for gender equality in *Bombshell* and the character's reasons for fighting for gender equality. to support this research using a descriptive Qualitative approach method to obtain primary data taken from Jay Roach's Film, *Bombshell* (2019) Secondary data from Journal, Book and Website research relevant to this study. From this study, the author uses as a reference used for research that has similarities with the author's research.

The latest research was conducted by Maria Botifar and Heny Friantary (2021) Titled *Reflections on Gender Injustice in Women with Turban Novels: Gender and Feminism Perspectives*. in this article she uses feminist theory. In this study, she also discusses gender and feminist perspectives. This analysis uses a qualitative approach method with an analysis description method. This research shows gender injustice in three circles 1) power circle 2) assumption circle 3) patriarchal circle, then the attitude of feminism theory is seen from a) the formation of women's self-concept b) women's independence c) freedom struggle for self-determination of one's own body. From this study, the author uses it as a reference to assess the Gender Inequality Theory with the author's research.

METHOD

This research method is qualitative. Data collection is obtained from fiction including narrative and dialogue (Amelia, 2021). While the results of this analysis are in the form of words (Kuswoyo, 2016). Qualitative research method is research that collects data with non-numerical types to interpret meaning (Puspita, 2020). In addition, this method is useful for looking at it from the point of view of analysis (Suprayogi, 2020). The use of this method is to gain an understanding of the reflection of gender inequality in women and the radical problems of feminist used in analyzing lilac girls novels. In addition, qualitative research can be interpreted as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words. Research data can be in the form of dialogues and statements (Heaverly, 2020). Qualitative is a method that understands phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, and actions in the form of sentences or language that have different contexts (Moleong 2005: 6). Data discussion is used to be able to find research results and be able to complete research by providing evidence about something that is used as reset material (Samanik, 2018). Thus, this method is used to find out how gender inequality is depicted in the novel Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research from the results of the analysis aims to find new things about gender inequality based on the form of stereotypes, marginalization, violence, and double burden to find under Nazi German during World War II. The data is presented in the form of narratives and dialogues used to describe the situation of World War II, which occurred due to the Nazi Government. There are acts of gender inequality that lead to stereotypes, marginalization, violence and double burdens in the novel Lilac Girls.

Using gender inequality with Mansour Fakih's structure, the study analyzed gender inequality faced by women during World War II. There are five patriarchal structures, but only a few have been found. Researchers found only three categories, stereotypes, marginalization, and violence.

Stereotypes in Gender Inequality

In addition, certain groups of women, such as those from minority or indigenous groups, those with disabilities, those from lower caste groups or with lower economic status, migrants, etc., are disproportionately negatively impacted by gender stereotypes when combined and intersect with other stereotypes. The act of assigning to a woman or man a particular trait, trait, or task just because he belongs to a female or male social group is known as gender stereotyping. When gender stereotypes lead to one or more violations of fundamental freedoms and human rights, they are wrong.

"Herta graduates soon from medical school," Father said. "On as accelerated track. She's interested in surgery." I excelled in the few surgery classes I was allowed to take, but being a woman, under national socialism, I was not allowed to specialize in surgery. (Kelly, 2016, p.34)

In Martha Hall Kelly's novel, a vivid portrayal of gender inequality during the tumultuous era of Nazi Germany in World War II is presented. The passage begins with Father discussing Herta's upcoming graduation from medical school and her interest in surgery, hinting at her ambitions and talents. However, the stark gender disparity of the time quickly becomes apparent as Herta laments her situation. She mentions excelling in her surgery classes, but her dreams are thwarted due to her gender: "I excelled in the few surgery classes I was allowed to take, but being a woman, under national socialism, I was not allowed to specialize in surgery."

This passage encapsulates the pervasive gender discrimination under the Nazi regime. Women like Herta faced significant limitations in their professional pursuits. The term "national socialism" alludes to the Nazi ideology that enforced traditional gender roles, emphasizing women's roles as wives and mothers while suppressing their opportunities for career advancement. Herta's story exemplifies how women were denied access to specialized fields, educational opportunities, and career paths that men enjoyed during that time. In essence, this narrative from the novel underscores the harsh reality of gender inequality in Nazi Germany during World War II, shedding light on the challenges and obstacles that women faced in their quest for personal and professional fulfillment within a deeply patriarchal and discriminatory society.

Once home, I tried to find my first job as a doctor, but even though I'd graduated second in my class, practices were reluctant to hire a woman doctor. It seemed the Party rhetoric about a woman's rightful place being at home raising children had taken root and many patients requested a male physician. Since, as a female university student, I'd been required to do the needlework classes, I took in sewing work for extra money (Kelly, 2016, p.68).

In the quotation above, there is a glimpse of how unfair things were for women in Nazi Germany during World War II. The passage talks about a woman who's a doctor, but she has a tough time finding a job. Even though she did really well in school, many doctor's offices didn't want to hire her just because she was a woman. People back then thought women should stay home and take care of kids, and this idea was strongly supported by the Nazi Party. Because of this, many patients only wanted to see male doctors. The woman in the passage had to learn sewing in college because that's what women were supposed to do. To make some extra money, she had to do sewing work. This passage shows how women in Nazi Germany faced discrimination in their careers and were expected to stick to traditional roles at home.

As for the narratives that lead to stereotypical acts that occur in women, the gender inequality experienced by women, focuses on narratives "The party's rhetoric about a woman's rightful place, being at home, raising children has taken root and many patients are asking for male doctors". Stereotypes cause people not to understand each other's diversity and prejudice. Suppose you pay attention to the narrative focusing on the phrase "patients requested a male physician", which explains that people firmly believe that treating in hospitals or clinics is men. In that case, they do not believe that women treat patients. This can be considered a prejudiced act before knowing and feeling the treatment actions taken by female doctors.

Marginalization in Gender Inequality

Marginalization places various influencing factors, namely sex gaps and poverty that affect all forms of action that occur in gender inequality. The term marginalization of gender describes the institutionalized social, cultural, and economic mechanisms that drive particular gender identities to the periphery of society, thereby denying them equitable access to opportunities, resources, and rights. People who don't fit into the standard binary concepts of gender (male/female) are disproportionately affected by this marginalization, which can also interact with marginalization based on ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic position. In this novel there is a narrative related to marginalization factors that lead to intersectionality can be seen based on the script.

Then there was that awful dustup outside the school gates. Nadia and I were leaving school when street boys started throwing rocks at Nadia and Calling her names because her grandfather was Jewish. Pietrik had been so quick to rescue her. People throwing rocks at Jews was not something unusual to see, but it was unusual for it to happen to Nadia. I'd never know she was part Jewish before that. we attended Catholic School, and she'd memorized more prayers than I had. but everyone knew once our German teacher, Herr speck, made us chart our ancestors and told the whole class. (Kelly, 2016, p.20)

The oppression or discrimination contained in the element of marginalization, if observed and obtained in the text, explains that there is discrimination against Jews which has become historical if Jews were considered enemies in the Wars of World War II not only adults who perpetrated the oppression of Jews but have entered the ranks of children where they perpetrated acts of oppression against Nadia, a woman who had limited walking who was bullied because her grandfather was a Jew who was considered an enemy in war.

Another Schutzstaffel man, skinny and shorter than the first, steeped in with canvas bread bag across his chest. Matka stood, fingers locked at her chest, as the skinny one went about the house opening drawers and stuffing whatever papers we had into his bag. My stomach hurt as I watched the skinny guard fling our cabinet doors and toss what little food we had into his bag. (Kelly, 2016, p.28)

Intersectionality intersects with oppression that harms a family and women who are taken away from their rights. In the manuscript, if we notice, there is the sentence, "My stomach hurt as I watched the skinny guard fling our cabinet doors and toss what little food we had into his bag" It is a form of oppression carried out against the Jewish community Houlser soldiers under the leadership of the Nazis carry out acts of oppression on the people, depriving them of their rights or depriving them of their property and taking their food, referring to intersectionality.

Violence in Gender Inequality

World War II had a conflict that lasted from 1939 to 1945 and involved many countries on various continents. Violence was one of the acts that occurred during World War II that lost millions of lives and destroyed. Based on the story of Lilac Girls, the violence found was military battles that resulted in civilians being the most victims, besides that there was the Holocaust or can be called a systematic carried out to prosecute and persecute Jews and the Polish nation and the Ravensbrück Concentration Camp which was used as

a location of violence and atrocities committed against women, the violence and trauma of World War II left a profound impact on society in all over the world.

Acts of violence are very detrimental to many parties in the background of the story that has been discussed, it has been briefly explained about Kasia who is a courier who is caught up in the underground resistance movement to fight Nazi rule in this notorious Nazi concentration camp is an all-female prison called Ravensbrück. In the narrative there is a violence that occurs against women who are prisoners along with a narrative related to violence based on the author's point of view.

Koegel ignored the spectacle below his window. As the prisoner fell to the ground. Her hands folded across the top of her head, the guard intensified the punishment. A second guard held back a leashed Alsatian as it spring forward, teeth bared. (Kelly, 2016, p.103)

Violence has become commonplace during World War II, considering the level of violence supported by the situation that occurred more freely Hitler's soldiers committed violence against women, their power was increasingly feared as well as the narrative above, when violence has become a common spectacle quoted in the sentence "He Guard intensified the punishment" women who have mistakes will get punishment where Hitler's soldiers will torture them by committing physical violence. Therefore, we should not assume that it is easy to fight violence that occurs against women. The purpose of their torture was to ensure that the drugs to be used by Nazi soldiers worked properly and had an effect on the human body, but this could not be justified because women were the victims. In addition, acts of violence that are treated against women are unnatural, they are born by women, but they treat women unkindly, such as physical violence that occurs in the narrative

The guard in the courtyard kicked the women in the midsection with her boot, the woman's screams hard to ignore. this was a violent from of reduction. (Kelly, 2016, p.103)

Physical violence experienced by women, one of which occurred in Ravensbrück, is that women are treated with various acts of violence but seen before the eyes of Dr. Herta Oberheuser is an act of physical violence explaining that "The guard in the courtyard kicked the women in the midsection with her boot" violence committed by kicking the female abdomen using boots, this is what is shown in Ravensbrück an act Violence every day without any pity and care for women. Physical action was carried out, regardless of age limit, even pregnant women could take action to abort, even to the point of killing mothers and babies who were still in their wombs, prisoners could not rebel because the power exercised by the Nazis was very fierce and no one dared to resist.

Surgical operations include acts of violence that cause damage to a person's body and psyche after undergoing surgery Kasia wakes up and realizes that her body is no longer perfect, many cuts and bruises without being treated, it was done so that the Nazis had a drug business and could force all parties to buy with it, the cruelty getting worse, more scary and terrible can be seen from the narrative written by Martha Hall Kelly in the novel Lilac Girls which has been described all forms of violence experienced by civilians or Kasia.

When Gebhardt cracked open my cast and I saw my leg, it no longer looked like a human limb. (Kelly, 2016, P.197)

In the following analysis, it is explained that Kasia was disappointed after seeing the foot in the sentence "I saw my leg" a sentence that was influential in violence that made the narrative as research data, Violence against women is a serious public health problem. Primary care can be one of the ideal places to detect gender-based violence. The violence inflicted on Kasia's body was done to experiment with sulfonamides and stimulate battlefield injuries to female prisoners in the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

CONCLUSION

In this section is a summary of the findings in the novel Lilac Girls. The author analyzes with a socio-historical approach to look at gender injustice from a historical point of view during World War II, the genre of Lilac Girls novels leads to feminists, but this study focuses on gender injustice under Nazi German to see the actions experienced by women during World War II based on the three main characters in Lilac Girls novel.

Caroline is caught up in a World War II situation, while Kasia, a Polish teenager, feels her carefree youth disappear as she sinks deeper into her role as a courier for the underground resistance movement. In a tense atmosphere with alert eyes and suspicious neighbors, one wrong move can lead to dire consequences. For a young German doctor who had ambitions to become a professional surgeon until he finally got information to work as a surgeon in Ravensbrück but it turned out that he was caught in the wrong situation.

The novel *Lilac Girls* depicts the atrocities that took place during World War II. Jews of Polish origin would be the first tribe sought by Hitler's Nazi army, according to them Poles were required to follow the system of power decided by the Nazis, but all Poles would not follow as much as they took away the rights of others. In the novel, there are various actions but the author only finds three categories namely, stereotypes, marginalization, and violence.

The stereotype was very detrimental to the Polish side, by having full power the Nazi army was free to take Polish goods and sell them to the Germans without guilt, not only goods but food and other necessities were taken so that the Poles did not have the slightest treasure and material for them to survive, even at-will Hitler declared war in September 1939 they sent bombs as a sign of war resulting in people dying as a result of the bombing. Their complete marginalization forbade women from working, and would not be given equal pay and education was not allowed more than men, this was what supported the act of marginalization in life during World War II.

Acts of violence experienced by women in Ravensbrück concentration camp that led to physical violence criminal acts and sexual acts where they treated women with disrespect and deprived women of their rights, making women's bodies the object of research This is where the side of gender inequality can be seen gender inequality that occurs based on women's actions and violence is required to follow the rules of the ruler and is not allowed to against the wishes of the rulers that cause real differences between men and women, indeed men and women differ according to the opinion of Simone de Beauvoir's philosophy physically and vigorously, but sexual harassment is not justified in gender inequality.

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