

**PATRIARCHAL REPRESENTATION OF FATHIYA IN YUSUF IDRIS'S SHORT STORY  
"AN-NADAHAH": A RADICAL FEMINIST LITERARY ANALYSIS**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study examines the representation of patriarchy and female resistance through the character of Fathiya in Yusuf Idris's short story *An-Nadahah* (1962). Employing Kate Millett's radical feminist theory, the research analyzes how patriarchal domination operates through sexual violence, male passivity, and the internalization of oppressive values within female consciousness. Using a qualitative approach with close reading techniques, the findings reveal that patriarchy functions not only as an external system of male domination, embodied by Afandi's sexual violence, but also through Hamed's silence and failure as a husband. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that Fathiya internalizes patriarchal norms that frame silence, shame, and self-sacrifice as moral imperatives. This analysis highlights how patriarchy controls women both structurally and psychologically, reinforcing the relevance of radical feminist theory in literary criticism.

**Keywords:** Patriarchy, Radical Feminism, and Yusuf Idris's Short Story "An-Nadahah"

**ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi patriarki dan perlawanan perempuan melalui tokoh Fathiya dalam cerpen An-Nadahah (1962) karya Yusuf Idris. Dengan menggunakan teori feminisme radikal Kate Millett, penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana dominasi patriarki bekerja melalui kekerasan seksual, sikap pasif laki-laki, serta internalisasi nilai-nilai opresif dalam kesadaran perempuan. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pembacaan dekat (close reading), hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa patriarki berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai sistem dominasi laki-laki yang bersifat eksternal yang diwujudkan melalui kekerasan seksual Afandi tetapi juga melalui sikap diam dan kegagalan Hamed sebagai seorang suami. Selain itu, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Fathiya menginternalisasi norma-norma patriarki yang membingkai sikap diam, rasa malu, dan pengorbanan diri sebagai keharusan moral. Analisis ini menegaskan bahwa patriarki mengendalikan perempuan baik secara struktural maupun psikologis, serta memperkuat relevansi teori feminisme radikal dalam kritik sastra.*

**Kata Kunci:** Patriarki, Feminisme Radikal, dan Cerpen "An- Nadahah" karya Yusuf Idris

## INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy has long shaped social relations in Middle Eastern societies, including Egypt, by positioning men as dominant authorities while relegating women to subordinate roles (Walby, 1990). Contemporary society remains deeply influenced by strong patriarchal structures that shape various aspects of life, including family, community, law, and culture. Patriarchy reinforces stereotypical gender roles, restricts women's freedom, and perpetuates gender inequality. Women are often viewed as second-class citizens, confined to domestic roles, and deprived of their fundamental rights (Butler, 1990).

Patriarchy is a social system that places men in a dominant position over women in various aspects of life, including family, society, law, and culture. Within a patriarchal system, women are often regarded as second-class citizens and are bound by traditional roles that confine them to the domestic sphere, while men have broader access to power and freedom.

Patriarchy is deeply rooted in various social and cultural institutions, ultimately reinforcing the subordinate position of women. In literary works, patriarchy is often portrayed as a structure that shapes the lives of female characters, restricts their freedom, and determines the course of their lives (Walby, 1990, p. 20).

The marginalization experienced by women is rooted in patriarchal culture societal values that position men as superior and women as subordinate. Such a patriarchal culture is reflected in family life, community structures, and national systems, serving as a source of justification for gender-biased distributions of authority, decision-making processes, divisions of labor, ownership systems, and the allocation of resources. This cultural framework ultimately leads to various forms of discrimination, marginalization, exploitation, and violence against women (Muhadjir, 2005).

This study employs feminist literary theory. Feminist literary criticism is a branch of literary theory that focuses on women as the central subject of analysis. The core substance of feminist ideology within literary studies is to critically understand how the roles and reputations of women are represented in literary works (Suharto, 2002). Feminism serves as an ideological critique of perspectives that overlook issues of inequality and injustice in the construction of social roles and identities based on gender differences (Melani, 2002).

According to Tong (2009, p. 29), radical feminist theory emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a response to the second wave of feminism, which advocated for gender equality across various spheres of life. Unlike liberal feminism, which focuses on policy and legal reforms to create equal opportunities, radical feminism identifies patriarchy as the root cause of women's oppression. It argues that gender inequality can only be eliminated through fundamental changes in patriarchal social and cultural structures.

Radical or cultural feminism views women's oppression as primarily rooted in patriarchy, which operates at both the familial and cultural levels. Within this system, women's sexual image is objectified, leading to their subjugation (Agger, 2009). Radical feminism argues that the source of women's oppression lies in male sex itself and its patriarchal ideology. According to radical feminism, men's physical domination of women such as through sexual relations forms the fundamental basis of women's oppression.

Feminist literary criticism seeks to uncover how such power relations are represented and reproduced in literary texts. Among its strands, radical feminism identifies patriarchy as the fundamental source of women's oppression, particularly through control over women's bodies and sexuality (Millet, 1970, p. 35). Feminist literary criticism seeks to uncover how such power relations are represented and reproduced in literary texts. Among its strands, radical feminism identifies patriarchy as the fundamental source of women's oppression, particularly through control over women's bodies and sexuality. Yusuf Idris's short story "*An-Nadahah*" is one of the literary works that highlights the lives of women in traditional Egyptian society.

Yusuf Idris's short story *An-Nadahah* presents a critical depiction of women's vulnerability within a patriarchal structure. Through the character of Fathiya, the narrative exposes sexual violence, male passivity, and the internalization of shame as mechanisms that sustain patriarchal domination. This study formulates several key research problems. First, it examines how various forms of patriarchy are represented in Yusuf Idris's *An-Nadahah*, particularly in relation to the character Fathiya. Second, it explores how patriarchal values are internalized by Fathiya through her actions, choices, and consciousness as a woman living within an oppressive social structure. Third, the study highlights the failure of male figures Afandi as the perpetrator of sexual domination and Hamed as a passive and neglectful husband in sustaining the patriarchal structure. Finally, this research critically investigates how radical feminist theory can be applied to uncover patriarchal domination and control over women's bodies and experiences in literary texts.

The objectives of this study are to identify and describe the forms of patriarchy represented in *An-Nadahah*, to analyze the internalization of patriarchal values by the character Fathiya, and to reveal the failure of male figures within the patriarchal structure. Additionally, this study aims to apply radical feminist theory as an analytical framework to understand how patriarchal power structures operate within Yusuf Idris's literary work.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

First, Mahmud Ma'ruf Abdul Nadzir examines the crisis of female consciousness in Yusuf Idris's short story "*Al-Nadahah*". (Nadzir, 2021) The study focuses on how narrative

techniques and aesthetic elements are used to convey social messages. Employing textual analysis and Hans Robert Jauss's reception theory, the research emphasizes the interaction between the text and its readers in revealing implicit social meanings. The findings contribute to broader studies of Yusuf Idris's works by highlighting the evolving social relevance of the text across different generations of readers.

Second, a study by Sarma Panggabean, Ronald Hasibuan, and Lestari Artamunte (2022) analyzes radical feminism in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Perawan Remaja dalam Cengkeraman Militer*. (Sarma, Hasibuan, & Artamunte, 2022) Using a descriptive qualitative method and content analysis, the research identifies various forms of radical feminism, including physical, psychological, and sexual violence, subordination, social oppression, and economic exploitation of women's bodies. The study concludes that violence is the most dominant manifestation of radical feminism in the novel.

Third, Fadhlurrahman, Juanda, and Suarni Syam Saguni investigate radical feminism in Adimodel's novel *Renjana Dyana*. (Fadhlurrahman, Juanda, & Saguni, 2021) Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study examines the forms of female supremacy and the factors leading to female radicalism. The findings indicate that female supremacy is represented through resistance to male dominance, particularly in the realm of sexuality, while patriarchy, religion, and economic conditions are identified as key factors contributing to the radicalization of the female character.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative approach with the aim of exploring the representation of the character Fathiya in Yusuf Idris's short story *An-Nadahah* through the lens of radical feminism. The primary data for this research are drawn directly from the text of *An-Nadahah*. Data collection was carried out through close reading to trace themes of patriarchy, gender inequality, control over women's bodies, and forms of resistance demonstrated by the female character. All relevant findings were systematically recorded for further analysis.

Data analysis involved identifying patriarchal themes within the text and linking them to radical feminist theory to examine how female characters particularly Fathiya are portrayed in confronting patriarchal domination. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study applied textual triangulation by comparing and confirming the data through multiple narrative quotations that depict themes of patriarchy, sexual domination, and female resistance across different parts of the short story.

Additionally, the study employed transparent thematic coding by marking and documenting key elements such as forms of male domination, the passive or active attitudes of female characters, and acts of resistance against the patriarchal system. This systematic

coding process was implemented to strengthen the consistency of the analysis and minimize subjective bias in textual interpretation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Yusuf Idris's short story "*An-Nadahah*" portrays the social realities of Egypt in the 1960s, which were still heavily influenced by the patriarchal system. In this context, patriarchy is understood as a social structure that positions men at the center of authority, while women are placed in subordinate roles (Walby, 1990, p. 20).

Patriarchy is a social system that places men at the center of power and authority in various aspects of life, both public and domestic. Within this system, men occupy dominant positions, while women are positioned as subordinates who are expected to conform to male-defined values and norms. Patriarchy is not only present within family structures but is also embedded in social, cultural, economic, and linguistic institutions that systematically perpetuate gender inequality (Millet, 1970). This system operates in subtle and deeply ingrained ways, often leading women to remain unaware of the forms of oppression they experience.

Feminism is a social, political, and intellectual movement that advocates for equal rights between men and women and rejects all forms of gender-based injustice. One of the most significant strands of feminism is radical feminism, which identifies patriarchy as the fundamental root of women's oppression (Tong, 2009). Radical feminism does not merely demand equality in legal or social spheres; it also critiques the power structures embedded within women's bodies, sexuality, and personal lives. Millet (1970) emphasizes that the oppression of women is not caused by biological factors, but by social and cultural systems that grant men the privilege to control women.

In literary studies, the radical feminist approach can be used to examine the representation of women in literary texts, particularly in relation to the body, sexuality, and patriarchal social structures. Yusuf Idris's short story "*An-Nadahah*", written by one of Egypt's most renowned literary figures, is a significant work that highlights these issues. The story follows Fathiya, a rural woman who moves to the city with her husband, Hamed. In the unfamiliar urban environment, Fathiya faces social pressure, sexual violence, and structural powerlessness, all of which reflect the strong influence of the patriarchal system in Egyptian society (Abdul Nazir, 2017). Through this narrative, Idris offers a social critique of the condition of women living within a masculine and oppressive social structure.

**The forms of patriarchy in this short story can be observed through three main aspects.**

### **Sexual Dominance Exercised by Afandi**

Afandi treats Fathiya merely as an object of sexual gratification, without acknowledging her will, dignity, or rights as a human being. In the scene of sexual violence, the narrative vividly depicts how the female body becomes a site of male power and control:

وبيد حديدية مدربة طوقها، وبيد مرتعشة بالرغبة مبهورة بالانتصار الساحق السريع تكاد لا تصدق نفسها أو ما يحدث، دفع بنطلونه دفعة واحدة تعرى على أثرها تماما، وبنفس اليد مزق ملابسها وهو يُحس بالصوت الصادر عن التمزيق بنشوة دونها أي نشوة أخرى على وجه الأرض، وحتى لو كانت في طريقها إلى الموت على أثر نزيف مثلا أو سكتة لكانت من غيبوبة الموت الحقيقي قد استيقظت، فللغريزة الحارسة للغريزة سلطان على الجسد أقوى من أي سلطان آخر.

“With strong and well-trained hands, he strangled the woman’s body, while his other hand trembled with lust, almost unable to believe that everything was happening so quickly and easily. He tore her clothes, listening to the sound of the fabric ripping with a sense of pleasure greater than anything else in the world.”

He treats Fathiya merely as an object of sexual gratification, disregarding her will, dignity, and fundamental human rights. Fathiya’s body becomes a site of male power, aligning with radical feminist thought which posits that the female body is the primary arena of patriarchal control (Millet, 1970).

### **Hamed’s Silence as a Reflection of Internalized Patriarchal Values**

Hamed, Fathiya’s husband, remains silent and passive in the face of the violence inflicted upon his wife. He neither resists nor intervenes; instead, he simply sits at the door, smoking, without taking any action. This silence reflects the deep internalization of patriarchal values within men, where women’s suffering is normalized and male authority remains unquestioned. Hamed’s passivity illustrates how patriarchy does not only operate through overt acts of domination but also through the complicity and inaction of men who accept the subordination of women as part of the social order.

بقي «حامد» على جلسته عند الباب يدخن من علبة السجائر الصغيرة التي اشتراها بما توفر له من نقود الأفندي.

“Hamed remained seated at the door, smoking a cigarette from the small pack he had bought with the leftover money from his master.”

Hamed's silence is vividly portrayed in the narrative: "Hamed remained seated at the door, smoking a cigarette from the small pack he had bought with the leftover money from his master." His inaction reflects his acceptance of patriarchal norms, illustrating how male passivity can reinforce female subordination within a patriarchal structure.

مرة أن تتكلم فأسكتها بزومة» منه، زومة حيوان جريح.

"Once, she tried to speak, but Hamed silenced her with a short growl—like the sound of a wounded animal."

Although he was aware of his wife's suffering, he neither resisted nor attempted to save her. He did not kill Fathiya, but he also did not defend her. Even when Fathiya tried to speak, he silenced her with a growl, like a wounded animal. Hamed's decision not to defend his wife reflects an internalization of patriarchal values, in which men accept gender inequality as something natural. In such a system, a woman who is "sexually tainted" is perceived as a moral burden that can be abandoned at any time, regardless of her suffering. Millet asserts that patriarchal domination operates not only through direct violence but also through the social and cultural acceptance of such power structures (Millet, 1970).

### Fathiya's Resistance

Despite being in a highly vulnerable position, Fathiya demonstrates an active form of resistance against male domination. During the assault scene, her weakened body still struggles, writhing and attempting to break free:

بذلك الكم الضئيل من القوة التي يدخرها الجسد ليقول بها آخر لاء في حياته، قاومت تعامل

جسدها يقاوم مقاومة لم تفعل أكثر من أنها استدعت إلى الوجود كل قوى الذئب الضبيع الكامن

وحشدها في ساقيه وذراعيه، حتى التفت حولها كفيود من فولاد لا يرحم، وبآخر ما تملك أعضا

تلملت، وبكل ما يملك أطبق

"Although her body was weak and she had almost no strength left, she summoned her last remaining energy to fight back. She writhed, struggling to free herself, her body resisting with all its might even though she knew that her strength was nothing compared to that of the hyena (Afandi)."

This resistance is both physical and spontaneous, signifying her rejection of the conquest of her body. Within the framework of radical feminism, this act is significant because the female body is considered the primary and most immediate site of patriarchal control (Beauvoir, 1949). By resisting, Fathiya demonstrates an awareness that she is not a passive subject. Although her resistance is not physically successful, its very presence indicates defiance against the power structures attempting to dominate her (hooks, 2000). This

illustrates that even in a state of powerlessness, women can express forms of resistance to patriarchal systems.

### **Fathiya's Internalization of Patriarchal Values**

After identifying the various forms of patriarchy that emerge in *An-Nadahah* ranging from Afandi's sexual domination, Hamed's passive and silent attitude as a husband, to the social conditions that entrap women the next step is to trace how these patriarchal values operate not only as external forces but also penetrate the consciousness of the female character. In this context, it is crucial to understand the process of patriarchy's internalization by the character Fathiya.

This internalization illustrates how patriarchal power structures do not merely control women's bodies physically, but also instill values and norms that lead women to accept, justify, or even reproduce the very system that oppresses them. Through the character of Fathiya, Yusuf Idris reveals how patriarchal power functions subtly and profoundly: it subjugates women not only through male domination but also through women's own consciousness.

In addition to being a victim of sexual violence and male neglect, Fathiya also represents the internalization of deeply rooted patriarchal values within her consciousness. The internalization of patriarchy is a process through which women absorb, accept, and even reproduce the very norms that oppress them, making oppression emerge not only from external forces but also from within themselves (hooks, 2000). This is clearly reflected in Fathiya's character, who gradually demonstrates acceptance of the oppressive situation she experiences.

Fathiya lives within a social structure that places women in a subordinate position, both within the household and in the wider community. In the situation of sexual violence she experiences, Fathiya's body becomes a site of male power. What is more complex, however, is that fear, shame, and her awareness of societal judgment lead her to choose not to cry out for help.

The following excerpt presents one of the most significant moments in *An-Nadahah*, illustrating how Fathiya consciously chooses not to scream for help, even though she knows it could save her:

وكان ممكناً أن تصرح تستنجد بالناس أن يقاوموا لها، ولكنها رفضت وأبت فالمعركة معركتها وحدها، ولن يفعل إدخال الناس أكثر من فضحها؛  
إذ السهم الآن نافذ فعلاً، والمكتوب قد حدث، وقد يمنع الناس استمرار حدوثه، ولكنهم أيضاً سيكونون شهود حدوثه، وتلك هي الكارثة  
التي تواجه الموت أو السقوط الخاص الذي لا يعرفه أحد، ولا تواجهها.

“She was fully aware that if she wanted to, she could scream loudly for help, and people nearby would surely come to her rescue. But she refused. To her, this was her private battle. If others found out, it would only bring her shame. Even worse, they would become witnesses

that ‘the incident’ had truly happened. And that was a destruction far more terrifying to her than death itself.”

This excerpt reflects the mechanism of patriarchal value internalization that operates through shame and social control over women’s bodies. In a patriarchal society, women are often constructed as the guardians of family and community honor. As a result, experiences of sexual violence are not only personal traumas but are also perceived as social “disgrace” that could tarnish the reputation of both the woman and her family (Al-Khalili, 2020).

Fathiya’s decision not to scream demonstrates that she has internalized social norms that blame female victims for the violence inflicted upon them. This sense of social shame silences victims not because they lack awareness of the danger, but because the social structure has shaped their responses to conceal and “protect” the honor attached to their bodies (Hassan, 2021). In many Arab and Middle Eastern societies, women’s virginity and chastity are often directly linked to the family’s moral status. Consequently, victims of sexual violence face a dual burden: personal trauma and social stigma (Abou-Bakr, 2022).

Moreover, Fathiya refers to the situation as “her private battle,” revealing how the burden of violence is shifted entirely onto the victim. She does not perceive society as a protector, but rather as a potential witness to her shame. Recent research by El Saadawi and Farag (2023) shows that this kind of internalization is the result of long-term social conditioning, in which women are taught to feel responsible for their own honor and safety within a gender-unequal context.

From a radical feminist perspective, this excerpt illustrates that patriarchy exercises control over women not only through direct violence but also through ideological and emotional control, turning women into “guardians” of the very system that oppresses them (Mahmoud, 2021). Fathiya becomes a passive subject not because she is incapable of physical resistance, but because her consciousness has been shaped to view resistance itself as something shameful.

Fathiya’s decision not to scream, despite being aware that help could actually come, reflects a powerful mechanism of patriarchal value internalization within her. She refuses to seek help out of fear of the shame and social stigma that would arise if the incident became known to others. This silence forms the psychological foundation for her next extreme thought: the belief that the only way out of this shameful situation is through her own death at the hands of her husband, Hamed. Initially, she chooses silence to protect her family’s “honor” from public disgrace; subsequently, she surrenders her life entirely to male authority to “resolve” the perceived violation.

The following excerpt illustrates Fathiya’s inner state:

حل للموقف كله إلا بأن يقتلها «حامد» ويستريح، وتستريح

“In her view, there was no other solution but for Hamed to kill her. That way, Hamed would be at peace, and so would she.”

«فتحية بحدوء شديد تجلس، ثم تترقد، ثم تعود إلى الجلوس، وتنتظر من «حامد» أن يفعلها وينتهي

“Meanwhile, Fathiya sat calmly, then lay down, and then sat up again. She was waiting for Hamed to do it to end it.”

This statement shows that Fathiya perceives death as the only way to restore social and moral “order.” She does not consider legal justice or personal recovery; instead, she entrusts the resolution entirely to male authority her husband, Hamed. This reflects a profound form of patriarchal value internalization, in which women position men as the central source of moral and social legitimacy over their bodies and lives (Mahmoud, 2021).

Within a patriarchal system, women are often not regarded as sovereign subjects over their own bodies. A woman’s body is perceived as belonging to men—whether fathers, husbands, or perpetrators and violations against it are treated as offenses against male or family “honor” (Abou-Bakr, 2022). Fathiya believes that by being “killed” by Hamed, the tarnished honor can be “cleansed,” and social order can be restored. This aligns with Al-Khalili’s (2020) findings that, in many Arab patriarchal societies, violence against women is often followed by pressure to “restore honor” through punishing the victim herself rather than the perpetrator.

Furthermore, this excerpt illustrates the loss of Fathiya’s psychological autonomy. She does not consider resistance, escape, or seeking social support; instead, she places herself within the patriarchal logic that dictates that “honor” can only be restored through male action upon the female body. According to El Saadawi and Farag (2023), this condition reflects the result of patriarchal conditioning, in which women are taught to perceive their fate through the lens of dominant male values rather than through self-awareness as autonomous subjects.

Within a radical feminist framework, this situation reveals how patriarchy exerts control over women not only through physical violence but also through the implantation of ideology and guilt, which turns women into supervisors of their own behavior (hooks, 2000; supported by Hassan, 2021). When women like Fathiya come to believe that death at the hands of their husbands is a “solution,” it indicates that the patriarchal system has successfully internalized its power within the victim’s consciousness.

## Male Figures' Failure in Sustaining the Patriarchal System

### The Character of Afandi: Predatory Masculinity and Moral Collapse

Afandi, as a representation of aggressive patriarchal power, becomes the primary perpetrator of sexual violence against Fathiya. He uses his physical strength and social position to subjugate the female body, treating Fathiya merely as an object of desire without regard for her dignity or agency.

The following excerpt illustrates how Afandi emerges as the main perpetrator of sexual violence against Fathiya:

فهو مجنون بالنساء جميعا، وفي سبيل أن يظفر بالواحدة منهن مستعد أن يفعل المستحيل، مستعد أن يكذب أو ينافق أو يسرق أو يقتل أو يستعمل القنبلة الذرية لو كان يملك واحدة، والمرأة عنده ليلة واحدة يقضيها معها، وبعد هذا يبحث عن الثانية، وكأنه أخذ نساء الأرض جميعا مقاوله، وعليه أن ينتهي منهن قبل أن يفرغ عمره

“He was obsessed with women. To obtain one, he would do anything lie, deceive, steal, even kill. If he had an atomic bomb, he might have used it for that purpose. For him, every woman was only for one night; afterward, he would look for another prey. It was as if all the women in the world were projects he had to complete before death came for him.”

This quotation illustrates Afandi's character as a male figure who fails morally, socially, and emotionally. In a patriarchal system, men are often positioned as leaders, protectors, and controllers of the social structure. However, Afandi uses his power and social position to exploit women for his personal gratification. He is depicted as “obsessed with women,” willing to do anything including lying, deceiving, stealing, and even killing to satisfy his sexual desires. This behavior reflects a form of toxic hegemonic masculinity, in which male power is not exercised to maintain social balance but rather to dominate and exploit women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2020).

Afandi perceives women not as autonomous subjects but as “projects” to be conquered. From a radical feminist perspective, this aligns with Kate Millet's critique of the patriarchal system, in which women's bodies become the primary site of male control not only through direct violence but also through ideological structures that treat women as male sexual property (Millet, 1970). Furthermore, the excerpt demonstrates Afandi's failure to regulate his sexual impulses and fulfill his role as a member of society. He lacks social responsibility and instead threatens social order through his destructive behavior. In patriarchal societies, such failures are often not regarded as male deviance but are normalized as “male traits,” thereby reinforcing the patriarchal structure itself (El-Kholy, 2021).

Thus, Afandi represents a male figure who fails both structurally and individually: he fails to be a protector, fails to control the power he possesses, and instead reinforces the patriarchal system through his exploitative behavior toward women.

### **The Character of Hamed: Passive Failure and Avoidance of Responsibility**

On the other hand, Hamed, as a husband, exhibits a different form of failure: moral and emotional failure. He witnesses his wife's suffering but takes no action to protect her or restore Fathiya's dignity. He neither kills nor defends her; instead, he leaves Fathiya in a state of trauma and devastation.

The following excerpt illustrates Hamed abandoning Fathiya:

وفي أول قطار قطع لهم حامد، التذاكر.  
لكنه عاد لبلدتهم وحده.

“At the station, Hamed bought the first available train ticket. However, he returned to his village alone.”

This excerpt represents the pinnacle of Hamed's failure as a husband, protector, and male figure within the patriarchal structure. In traditional patriarchal societies, men are often regarded as figures with full authority in the family—determining the direction of family life, protecting women, and upholding family honor (Kandiyoti, 2019). Yet Hamed demonstrates the opposite: he chooses to abandon Fathiya, his wife, without attempting resolution, protection, or even communication.

His decision to return to his village alone illustrates a withdrawal from patriarchal responsibility. Rather than acting as an active agent who controls and resolves conflicts, he becomes a passive figure incapable of confronting reality. This attitude reflects his failure to meet the expectations of the traditional male role as protector and authority figure. From a radical feminist perspective, Hamed's actions also demonstrate how the patriarchal system not only oppresses women but also shapes men with rigid standards of masculinity that, when unmet, produce identity crises and avoidance behaviors (hooks, 2015).

Moreover, Hamed's choice to abandon Fathiya reveals an internalization of patriarchal values that frame women as a moral burden to be discarded. After the “honor” of his household is tarnished, he does not consider the possibility of restoration or resistance; the only “solution” is to distance himself from the source of the “shame”—the woman herself. This reinforces radical feminist critiques that patriarchy does not allow women the space to experience, process, and overcome trauma fairly control always resides in the hands of men, and when men fail to exert it, women are sacrificed (Hamad, 2021).

Hamed's silence illustrates how men in a patriarchal system function not only as direct perpetrators of violence but also as passive agents who perpetuate oppression through indifference and compliance with social norms (Abdel Wahab, 2023).

Thus, Hamed fails not only as an individual but also embodies the failure of patriarchy itself: a system that idealizes male power proves fragile when

### **The Dual Faces of Male Failure in Patriarchy**

If Hamed represents a male figure who fails through passivity and escapism, Afandi, on the other hand, embodies male failure through a form of predatory and destructive masculinity. Although their behaviors contrast sharply, both figures reveal how the patriarchal system produces problematic male characters that ultimately harm women.

Afandi is portrayed as someone who actively dominates women, particularly Fathiya, through acts of brutal and controlling sexual violence. He treats women merely as objects for the gratification of his desires, devoid of empathy or any consideration for their humanity. Afandi manifests a form of hegemonic masculinity driven by the urge to control and conquer women's bodies echoing radical feminist analyses that emphasize how the female body serves as the primary site of patriarchal control (Millet, 1970; Hamed, 2021). In him, patriarchy finds its most explicit channel of power: sexual domination.

Conversely, Hamed represents the passive side of patriarchal male failure. He does not directly oppress, but neither does he protect, defend, nor take an active stance in confronting reality. His decision to abandon Fathiya underscores a form of failure rooted in the inability to fulfill the masculine role imposed by patriarchal norms. Rather than becoming the "protector" as socially expected, he chooses to escape responsibility. From a radical feminist perspective, this illustrates that patriarchy not only produces perpetrators of violence (such as Afandi) but also creates male figures who remain silent, irresponsible, and complicit in reproducing oppression through their inaction (hooks, 2015; Kandiyoti, 2019).

This comparison is significant because it highlights the two faces of patriarchy:

1. The active and brutal face (Afandi), which directly dominates women's bodies through sexual violence.
2. The passive and neglectful face (Hamed), which allows oppression to occur and reinforces patriarchal structures through silence.

These two forms of failure Afandi's active aggression and Hamed's passivity reveal that male figures in the story do not function as protectors or supporters of women. Instead, they operate as integral components of the patriarchal system that oppresses them. From a radical feminist perspective, patriarchy endures not only through men's acts of violence

against women but also through men's failure to challenge the structure itself, thereby reinforcing cycles of domination and subordination (Hassan, 2021). Thus, *An-Nadahah* critiques not only male violence but also the inability of men to act as moral agents in confronting a system that subjugates women.

## CONCLUSION

A radical feminist analysis of Yusuf Idris's short story *An-Nadahah* reveals that patriarchy operates through multiple forms of domination, internalization, and male role failure. Patriarchal structures are evident in Afandi's sexual domination over Fathiya's body, Hamed's silence reflecting passive complicity within the patriarchal system, and Fathiya's limited resistance as a form of defiance against male authority. Furthermore, the internalization of patriarchy in Fathiya is apparent in her decision to remain silent and accept her suffering as a personal shame. Patriarchal values have permeated her consciousness, shaping feelings of shame and helplessness. The failures of male figures are illustrated through Afandi as an active agent of domination and Hamed as a passive figure who evades responsibility. Together, they represent the two faces of male failure within patriarchy: active and passive. Thus, the short story presents a complex patriarchal structure that is highly relevant for analysis from a radical feminist perspective.

This study concludes that patriarchy in *An-Nadahah* operates through interconnected mechanisms of sexual violence, male passivity, and internalized oppression. Afandi embodies active patriarchal domination through predatory masculinity, while Hamed represents passive complicity through silence and abandonment. Meanwhile, Fathiya's resistance, though limited, reveals both defiance and deep internalization of patriarchal shame. From a radical feminist perspective, the text demonstrates that patriarchy sustains itself not only through physical violence but also through ideological control over women's consciousness, reinforcing the necessity of feminist literary critique in exposing these structures.

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