

**WOMEN OBJECTIFICATION IN *THE TESTAMENTS* BY MARGARET  
ATWOOD (2019)**

**Thesis**

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain  
Strata One ( S1 ) Degree*



**Aisyah Amilatul Quran**

**16019029/2016**

**Advisor:**  
**Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum, PhD**  
**NIP. 197105251998022002**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS  
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG  
2020**

HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

Judul : Women Objectification in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019)  
Nama : Aisyah Amilatul Quran  
NIM/BP : 16019029/2016  
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris  
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, 27 Oktober 2020

Disetujui oleh:

Pembimbing



Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., P.hD.  
NIP. 19710525 199802 2 002

Mengetahui,

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris



Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., P.hD.  
NIP. 19710525 199802 2 002

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi Program  
Studi Sastra Inggris Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan  
Seni Universitas Negeri Padang  
dengan Judul

Women Objectification in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019)

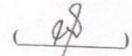
Nama : Aisyah Amilatul Quran  
NIM/BP : 16019029/2016  
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris  
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, 27 | Oktober 2020

Tim Penguji

Tanda Tangan

1. Ketua : Dr. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S.,M.A.



2. Sekretaris : Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A.



3. Anggota : Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D. (





**SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT**

Saya yang bertandatangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Aisyah Amilatul Quran  
NIM/TM : 16019029/2016  
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris  
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Dengan ini menyatakan, bahwa Tugas Akhir saya dengan judul *Women Objectification in The Testaments by Margaret Atwood (2019)* adalah benar merupakan hasil karya saya dan bukan merupakan plagiat dari karya orang lain. Apabila suatu saat terbukti saya melakukan plagiat maka saya bersedia diproses dan menerima sanksi akademis maupun hukum sesuai dengan hukum dan ketentuan yang berlaku, baik di institusi Universitas Negeri Padang maupun masyarakat dan negara.

Demikianlah pernyataan ini saya buat dengan penuh kesadaran dan rasa tanggung jawab sebagai anggota masyarakat ilmiah.

Diketahui oleh,

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris,

Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D  
NIP. 19710525 199802 002

Menyatakan,  
  
Aisyah Amilatul Quran  
NIM. 16019029

## ABSTRACT

**Quran, Aisyah Amilatul.** 2020. Women Objectification in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019). Thesis. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang.

The purpose of this analysis is to expose the issue of women objectification in novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood. The issue of women objectification refers to the various ways men objectify and subordinate women's characters in every aspect of women's life. This analysis focuses on *men's actions in restricting women's life choices and using religion as a shield to regulate women's body*. This analysis is text-based interpretation based on the concept of women objectification theory proposed by Martha Nussbaum. This analysis uses fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict) and setting that contribute in revealing the issue. The result of the study reveals the way men objectify women is done two ways; they are choice restriction and religion distortion.

**Key words:** women, objectification, patriarchy

## ABSTRAK

**Quran, Aisyah Amilatul.** 2020. Women Obejctification in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019). Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang.

Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengungkap isu objektifikasi perempuan dalam novel *The Testaments* (2019) karya Margaret Atwood. Persoalan obyektifikasi perempuan mengacu pada berbagai cara laki-laki mengobjektifkan dan menundukkan karakter perempuan dalam setiap aspek kehidupan perempuan. Analisis ini berfokus pada tindakan laki-laki dalam membatasi pilihan hidup wanita dan menggunakan agama sebagai tameng untuk mengatur tubuh perempuan. Analisis ini merupakan interpretasi berbasis teks berdasarkan konsep teori objektifikasi perempuan yang dikemukakan oleh Martha Nusbaum. Analisis ini menggunakan perangkat fiksi seperti karakter, plot (konflik) dan setting yang berkontribusi dalam mengungkap suatu isu. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan cara laki-laki mengobyektifkan perempuan dilakukan dengan dua cara; pembatasan pilihan dan distorsi agama.

**Kata kunci:** perempuan, objektifikasi, patriarki

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated my honor, love and affection to:

My beloved family, I would not be able to write this thesis without their support. I would like to thank, my beloved father, Agus Wahid Rahman, my mother Marsinah, my siblings for their endless money they gave, love, care and encouragement over the time. They are my source of energy. I would like to thank god for giving me a husband, Aldila Putra Ramadhan. Thank you for lifting me up all the time and loving me even when im in my lowest part of my life, looking forward to see you come home baby. In addition, I would like to thank my bestfriends Anisa Choirany, Hafiz Alfandi, and Melati Nuraini for kindness and affection while I was living in Padang. I am so glad that we can support each other on pursuing our dreams. I hope we can make all of our dreams happen. I would like to thank my percil Saridewi Maratushaliyah and Hania Fadhilatunnisa for always giving me lots of foods and support until i finally come to this phase. Thank you for always cheering me up, giving me strength and encouraging me to do positive things. Last but not least, thanks to NK2 2016 and NK-Literature 2016 members. May Allah always shower your life with His blessings.

## **MOTTO**

STRAIGHTEN YOUR HEAD, LOOK FORWARD, AND CONTINUE YOUR  
JOURNEY

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful.

Alhamdulillah, all praises to Allah and His blessing for the completion of this thesis entitled “**Women Objectification in *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood (2019)**”. I thank God for all the opportunities, trials and strength that have been showered on me to finish writing this thesis. I experienced so much during this process. My humblest gratitude to the holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) whose way of life has been a continuous guidance for me. First, I would like to sincerely thank my thesis advisor Desvalini Anwar, S.S, M.Hum, Ph.D, for her guidance, understanding, patience and most importantly, she has provided encouragement and a warm spirit to finish this thesis. Also to my lecturer Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A., it has been a great pleasure and honour to have her as my favorite lecturer. I hope that i can be a great person in the future to make you proud. I would like to thank also to the examiners, Dr. Muhd. Al Hafizh, S.S, M.A and Delvi Wahyuni, S.S., M.A for their precious advice, critics and correction from the beginning up to the end of the writing. Moreover, I would like to express my appreciation to Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D., as the Head of English Department and Dr. Muhd. AlHafizh, S.S, M.A., as the secretary of English Department. I do also want to thank to all the lecturers of the department and faculty who taught and guided me during my academic years.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	i
ABSTRAK .....	v
DEDICATION .....	vi
MOTTO .....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION .....	1
A. Background of the Study .....	1
B. Women Objectification.....	6
C. A Brief Description of the Author's Biography .....	7
D. <i>The Testaments</i> (2019) .....	9
E. Problem of the Study .....	11
F. Purposes of the Study.....	11
G. Previous Studies .....	11
H. Theoretical Framework .....	13
I. Methodology .....	16
1. Type of Research .....	16
2. Object of the Research.....	17
3. Technique of Data Collection.....	17
4. Method and Techique of Data Analysis .....	17
CHAPTER II DISCUSSION .....	18
A. Choice Restrictions.....	19
1. Denial of Autonomy .....	19
2. Inertness .....	21
3. Silencing .....	23
B. Religion Distortion .....	25
1. Instrumentality .....	25
2. Ownership.....	27
3. Fungibility .....	28
CHAPTER III CONCLUSION.....	31
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	33



# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of the Study**

Patriarchy system in the world has become an obvious threat for women. The culture influenced by patriarchal system may cause harmful consequences for women. According to Walby (1990), patriarchy is a social system in which the role of the male as the primary authority figure is central to society, and where males hold authority over women, children, and property. Patriarchy imposes masculinity and femininity character stereotypes in society which strengthen the iniquitous power relations between men and women (Walby 1990: 20). Power is closely related to privilege. In a system that has the principle that men are stronger and more powerful than women, men have several levels of privileges in which women are not accredited. Women do suffer because of men's domination in every aspect of life. Men tend to subordinate women whilst women are under men's control.

Patriarchal ideology spreads to the society viewing men as the holder of primary authority and main roles in society. Johnson (2005) postulates that "A society is patriarchal to the degree that it promotes male privileged by being male dominated, male identified, and male centered. It is also organized around an obsession with control and involves as one of its key aspects the oppression of women." (p.3). When women realize that they are in a position of oppression and subordination, society will perceive women as a group suitable to be treated like that and begin to instill the stigma that women deserve it. Patriarchal ideology tends to believe men's opinion has stronger credibility and power than women's.

Johnson (2005) and other scholars assert that when a society identifies certain groups, such as men, as the standard for humans in general, men will be seen as superiors leading to situations where everything that men looked up to. Nonetheless, this idea points women as the weak creature and considers them to be inferior to men.

Despite the extension of women's roles in society and of legally acknowledged women's rights, the culture remains patriarchal in its institutions, its ideology, and its distribution of power. According to Anwar (2016, 2019) everyone's life has been influenced and shaped by the political and social conditions around (p 115). If the culture remains patriarchal and everyone shaped as the agent of patriarchy it will affect the system in that community. Men will think they are holding the higher power and women will suffer because they are labeled inferior. It leads into inequality between men and women inflicting different treatments toward the women in some crucial aspects such as jobs, salary issues and the activities assigned to them. It is reinforced through a patriarchal societal system that gives bigger benefit to men rather than the women. Consequently, society starts seeing women as an unvalued object. This notion is called women objectification.

Objectification involves the activity of lowering a person to the status of an object. Objectification involves the process of degrading human's value in society and comparison to other human being. Langton states when it comes to the objectification of women, women become submissive and object-like because of men's desires and beliefs. Men desire women to be this way, and, if they have power, they force women to become this way (Langton 2000, 138–142). It

happens in various ways because they are labeled as a minority group. From the printed media, online media, to the activities in daily life, objectification of women is real and has spread in society. In fact, some believe it is an aspect embedded in modern society so that most are not fully aware of its negative effects on the development of young women and men.

Women objectification leads to the women subhuman. The smartest thing the patriarchy does was branding objectification as empowering. They assign women's portrayal as soft, beautiful and obedient creatures. However, those images given by them are aimed to weaken women (Sultana 2011:3). Women objectification cases are highly found in countries with strong patriarchal culture. These days, the patriarchal culture is still happening in the world. Most of the entire world is influenced by the patriarchal system. It controls the means of politics, economy, society, and ideology. According to Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence (2017):

“Violence against women maintains the structures of gender oppression; be it carried out by individuals in private or by institutional forces in the public sphere. In combat zones, it is now more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier. Families, communities, and social, legal and civic institutions may covertly and overtly endorse it. Whilst violence commands greater attention and fear; sexism and misogyny do their share to shape inequality, by defining and upholding restrictive gender norms. Culture is used to justify gender inequality and violence by evoking traditional cultural beliefs about how women should be treated. The defense of the culture of a place, country, religion, etc., is in fact a defense of the culture of patriarchy in that country, religion, identity; and the culture of violence everywhere. The culture of patriarchy is not static: its manifestation on an army base differs from that in a rural town; just as the

culture of patriarchy in Chicago differs from that of Dubai, or Manila.”

Like every society in the world, which is subdued by patriarchy, women are ruled by men in such a high level. Women are restricted in many aspects such as basic human rights, education choices and jobs.

Any knowledge worth having is the product of sustained intellectual and imaginative work, rather than something that is immediately available to us. The starting point for all of us surely involves positing a common world, whatever the field of inquiry in which we operate and the beliefs and values into which we may have been socialized. We all live in the same world. What, then, do we make of it? This is to envisage a situation where people from a variety of disciplines, employing a range of approaches to inquiry, might come together and draw on the insights that each might make available in order to achieve socially worthwhile goals. (p 34)

As Doecke, Anwar, and Illesca state in their article “Narrative Language and Literacy Education Research Within a Postcolonial Framework” (2017), people need to be educated, and given some of the knowledge so they can associate the knowledge they have and apply it to their life. Those who are educated can set their life goal and have their integrity so they will be success in life. However, in this case, education women get is limited. The purpose is clear that men will not let women be equal to them so that they can still control and treat women as they like.

Women’s rights are still suppressed in terms of having equality. They want the fundamental human rights which include the right to live free from violence, to be educated, to be heard, to vote, and to earn fair wage. Women are fighting for their rights in order to change how countries and communities work. While men

dominated in so many aspects such as in politics, they become the head of state. They will not let women leading the politics because women are seen as weak and meek. They believe women can only be good in doing house chores, babysitting, and other domestic chores which are based on the double standards that society created to limit women movements. This idea is based on how society constructs women's role in life which leads into domestication.

The issue to be discussed relates to real life phenomenon is the case of women in Afghanistan, who are being both objectified and subordinated not only by the men but also by the country's law. Tonita Murray states in her article, *The Oppressed Women of Afghanistan: Fact, Fiction, or distortion* (2012), that Afghan society is considerably gendered. It can be seen in the form of miserable distinctions between the roles of women and men, and is patriarchal and paternalistic. It is applied comprehensively with masculine values such as honor, justice, and hospitality, while the roles assigned to women limit their agency or ability to act (2012:2). Afghanistan women are treated as an object which can be seen in the form of home isolating. They are not allowed to go out freely unless for the emergency case. Thus the bodies of Afghan women are controlled physically, spatially, and politically by men because of their symbolic importance to the integrity of the family and the tribe.

The issue of women objectification has been exposed in many literary works, such as poems, novels, and plays. This analysis focuses on the novel written by Margaret Atwood. Her novel that is related to this topic is *The Testaments*. Her novel shows the actions of the men to subordinate women in a country with the law the country made. The characters of this novel are dominated

by the women who lose their rights in making their own decision. They have no rights to decide their marriage. They also have no rights to get a proper education because their future is determined to be a housewife. The elites can take the women's babies by buying the women to live with them as a servant. The women are raped and the babies are taken away from their mother. They do it in disguise of law and religion principles. This issue is important to be discussed because people need to be aware that the phenomenon of women objectification is real. In addition, this study can be a source to other researchers who are interested to explore the same topic related to women objectification.

## **B. Women Objectification**

There are two keywords from the terminology in this study. They are women and objectification. According to The Dictionary of Feminist Theory (1995), woman is a noun referring to adult human beings who is biologically female; that is, capable of bearing off spring. In addition, Geek Feminism Dictionary (2020) defines objectification as a notion central to feminist theory which occurs when a person is seen as sexual object when their sexual attributes and physical attractiveness are separated from the rest of their personality and existence as an individual, and reduced to instruments of pleasure for another person.

Women objectification in this study refers to the men's actions in restricting women's life choices and using religion as a shield to regulate women's body. Men's wickedness in this novel is seen in the way men would intentionally marry, divorce and even murder their wives. The narrators of this

novel are Aunt Lydia, Agnes, and Daisy who represent victims of the country, Gilead. They are first seen as weak but in the end they fight against the men to break down the patriarchal system in Gilead.

### **C. A Brief Description of the Author's Biography**

Margaret Eleanor Atwood, was born on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1939, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. She is a Canadian writer best known for her prose fiction and for her feminist perspective. In her youth, Atwood divided her time between Toronto, her family's primary residence, and the sparsely settled bush country in northern Canada, where her father, an entomologist, conducted his research. She began writing when she was five and resumed her efforts ten years later. After completing her university studies at Victoria College at the University of Toronto, Atwood earned a master's degree in English literature in 1962 from Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In her early poetry collections, *Double Persephone* (1961), *The Circle Game* (1964, revised in 1966), and *The Animals in That Country* (1968), Atwood deliberates human behavior, celebrates the natural world, and condemns materialism. Role reversal and new beginnings are recurrent themes in her novels, all of them center on women provides their relationship to the world and the individuals around them. *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985; film 1990; opera 2000) is constructed around the written record of a woman living in sexual slavery in a repressive Christian theocracy of the future that has seized power in the wake of an ecological upheaval; a TV series based on the novel premiered in 2017 and was written by Atwood. The Booker Prize-winning *The Blind Assassin* (2000) is an

intricately constructed narrative centering on the memoir of an elderly Canadian woman ostensibly writing in order to dispel confusion about both her sister's suicide and her own role in the posthumous publication of a novel supposedly written by her sister.

Margaret Atwood sees her works as feminist in some ways. She expresses her thought and ideology in her writings. As in Natasha Walter's report at The Guardian, *Margaret Atwood's new work is full of feminist hope. But do not dumb it down* (2019), Atwood states:

"If you mean a novel in which women are human beings, with all the variety of character and behavior that implies and are also interesting and important, and what happens to them is crucial to the theme, the structure and plot of the book, then yes."

Atwood views feminist fiction as a manifestation of knowledge necessary, because it enables the readers to expand their political understanding of a messy and difficult world. That factor makes her novel great since she includes empowerment in it. The domain Atwood has in writing her novels also goes on political views which is irreducible from real life. Other novels by Margaret Atwood included the surreal *The Edible Woman* (1969) *Surfacing* (1972; filmed in 1981), is an exploration of the relationship between nature and culture that centre on a woman's return to her childhood home in the northern wilderness of Quebec, *Lady Oracle* (1976), *Cat's Eye* (1988), *The Robber Bride* (1993; television film 2007), and *Alias Grace* (1996), a fictionalized account of a real-life Canadian girl who was convicted of two murders in a sensationalist 1843 trial; a TV miniseries based on the latter work aired in 2017, written by Atwood and Sarah Polley.

Atwood's 2005 novel, *The Penelopiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus*, was inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*.

In 2019 *The Testaments*, a sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, was published to critical acclaim and was a co-winner (with Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*) of the Booker Prize. Atwood also writes short stories, collected in such volumes as *Dancing Girls* (1977), *Bluebeard's Eggs* (1983), *Wilderness Tips* (1991), *Moral Disorder* (2006), and *Stone Mattress* (2014). Her nonfiction collection includes *Negotiating with the Dead: A Writer on Writing* (2002), which grows out of a series of lectures she gave at the University of Cambridge; *Payback* (2008; film 2012), an impassioned essay that treats debt—both personal and governmental—as a cultural issue rather than as a political or economic one; and *In Other Worlds: SF and the Human Imagination* (2011), in which she illuminates her relationship to science fiction. Atwood writes the libretto for the opera *Pauline*, about Canadian Indian poet Pauline Johnson; it premiered at the York Theatre in Vancouver in 2014.

In addition to writing, Atwood teaches English literature at several Canadian and American universities. She wins the PEN Pinter Prize in 2016 for the spirit of political activism threading her life and works.

#### **D. *The Testaments* (2019)**

*The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood reflects men's actions of women objectification. According to The Dictionary of Feminist Theory (1995), woman is a noun referring to adult human beings who are biologically female; that is, capable of bearing off springs. In addition, Geek Feminism Dictionary

(2020) defines objectification as a notion central to feminist theory which occurs when a person is seen as sexual object when their sexual attributes and physical attractiveness are separated from the rest of their personality and existence as an individual, and reduced to instruments of pleasure for another person.

The narrators of this novel are Aunt Lydia, Agnes, and Daisy who represent victims of the country, Gilead. Through setting, character, plot and point of view, the novel depicts the country's depravity. Its totalitarian theocracy government which most of them are men, influenced by patriarchy ideology, views women as a mere object. Women are divided into four classifications which are Wives, Aunts, Handmaids, and Marthas. Regardless what class a woman belongs to, she will be objectified. Religion is used as a disguise to cover men's intention in objectifying women. As a matter of fact, the true principles of religion are distorted. Thus, women objectification in this study refers to the men's actions in restricting women's life choices and using religion as a shield to regulate women's body.

In terms of choice restriction, women are given limited options. The men do not allow women to get proper education. The subjects given in school are gardening and knitting which are considered to be women's works. In fact, the ability to read and write is forbidden for them. Besides, they are not allowed to decide which career they want. They also cannot choose their own spouse. Their activities are being watched as if they do not have a free space for their own.

In terms of religion distortion, the regime changes the verses in holy book for their own importance. The men, which most of them lead the country, force fertile women to produce children in the name of nobility. The men use religion to

cover their depraved actions. The Commanders maintain principles based on their objection. They use their privilege to doctrine the people about wrong interpretation of the religion's principles.

### **E. Problem of the Study**

This study focuses on the issue of women objectification. There are two research questions that give contributions to reveal the issue. They are:

1. How does the novel portray the issue of women objectification?
2. What are the ways the men do to objectify women in novel *The Testaments* (2019)?

### **F. Purposes of the Study**

This study is aimed at finding out two main points. The first one is to discover how the novel portrays the issue of women objectification. The second is to know the ways the men do to objectify women in novel *The Testaments* (2019).

### **G. Previous Studies**

The analysis of *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood which focuses on the analyzing women objectification has not been found yet. However, there are two articles give the contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel.

The first one is the study entitled *Sexual Objectification of Women: Advances to Theory and Research* by Dawn M. Szymanski, Lauren B. Moffitt, and Erika R. Carr (2011). The study focuses on investigating the lives of women in socio-cultural situations where their bodies are sexually made as objects and

agree that women's values are equated with their social appearance and function. The purpose of this article is to introduce the readers to objectification that can broaden women's understanding of objectification by providing concrete examples in the real world in various ways. Szymanski connects the objectification of women with the impact of women's lives. Those who have a strong determination to get out of a calm situation will make themselves stronger and wiser minds. They will be able to fight for justice and destroy oppression by those who feel powerful based on gender.

The second journal is *Understanding Objectification: Is There Special Wrongness Involved in Treating Human Beings Instrumentally?* By Evangelia Papadaki (2012). This article points around women sexual objectification. It offers an analysis of the notions that are involved in this phenomenon, their moral wrongness, as well as the connections that exist between them. In this paper, the author opposes the view that application must be considered from being more suspicious by a moral standpoint than the rest of the way in where people can be treated as objects. Choosing extreme mediation for being very problematic can make people underestimate the mistakes involved in other ways of treating humans as objects. Therefore it can potentially distort our understanding of what is wrong generally with objectifying human beings

Both of these studies give contribution and inspiration in analyzing the novel *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood. The issue of women objectification in these articles exposes how the form of mistreatment, domination, subordination and restriction experienced by women. These studies show how women are objectified sexually and also in social functions.

## H. Theoretical Framework

Objectification theory is seen as a framework for understanding the experiential consequences of being female in a culture that subordinate women in every aspect of life. Objectification theory posits that girls and women are typically acculturated as a primary view of their physical selves. This perspective itself can lead to habitual body monitoring, which, in turn, can increase women's opportunities for shame and anxiety, reduce opportunities for peak motivational states, and diminish awareness of internal bodily states. The analysis about women objectification in this study is related to the theory of Martha Nussbaum's Objectification in feminist perspectives on sex and gender and Chatarine MacKinnon's *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*.

In her article, objectification (1995;24,4), Martha Nussbaum has identified seven features that are involved in the idea of treating a person as an object. They are *instrumentality* (the treatment of a person as a tool for the objectifier's purposes), *denial of autonomy* (the treatment of a person as lacking in autonomy and self-determination), *inertness* (the treatment of a person as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity), *fungibility* (the treatment of a person as interchangeable with other objects), *violability* (the treatment of a person as lacking in boundary-integrity), *ownership*, (the treatment of a person as something that is owned by another which can be bought or sold), and *denial of subjectivity* (the treatment of a person as something whose experiences and feelings need not be taken into account).(p.257)

These seven features above are the way people treat an object and how men treat women in case of objectification. Men, in this case, tend to view women

as an instrument to be used as sexual goals or commodities. These treats lead women to have negative consequences such as heightened body shame, sexual harassment, and murdering. Women are treated as less than fully human, perceived to have less of a mind for thought or decisions and deserve less moral treatment by men. While, in terms of denial of autonomy, women are confined to develop their mental capacity. As the result, men's willingness to commit sexually aggressive actions toward them remains increased. It is clear that in the novel, since a very young age, women are trained and taught to learn women's chores. They cannot do another activity beyond what are given from the institution. The men in government, who has the highest authority, limit women activities which can lead women development into the movement.

Furthermore, Rae Langton (2009, 228–229) has also added three more features to Nussbaum's list: *reduction to body* (the treatment of a person as identified with their body, or body parts), *reduction to appearance* (the treatment of a person primarily in terms of how they look, or how they appear to the senses), and *silencing* (the treatment of a person as if they are silent, lacking the capacity to speak).

The men not only restrict women's choice and capacity, but also the role they play in social practices. The women who are fertile and able to have a baby are not allowed to get a job except being a handmaid. Chatarine MacKinnon in her journal, *Sexuality, Pornography, and Method: Pleasure under Patriarchy* (1989), says;

"The stance of the 'knower' is the neutral posture, which I will be calling objectivity—that is the nonsituated distanced standpoint. This is the male

standpoint socially. The relationship between objectivity as the stance from which the world is known and the world that is apprehended in this way is the relationship of objectification. Objectivity is the epistemological stance of which objectification is the social process, of which male dominance is the politics, the acted out social practice. That is, to look at the world objectively is to objectify it" (MacKinnon 1989, 50).

The statement above explains how men are the main agent of women objectification. Men dominate the social and political factors which can lead to rule women's way of life. With the power they have in politics and other social practices, men freely dictate, objectify and limit women's choice in life. As a matter of fact, the law made by government gives the regulation to limit women choice in achieving learning materials in school and restrict women's career and future. This action aims to silence women from speaking out the depravity they get in that country. It is also clear that once women are educated, it will become a threat for the patriarchal society.

Another fictional device is setting. Setting is everything that makes up a story. In Birkerts (1993) setting refers both to the physical location of the events and to the time in which they happen. Setting then is the environment that surrounds the characters and influences them and their action (p.53-54). Not only does setting give insight about place, time and atmosphere, but it also contributes in the analysis of this literary works. This novel set place in a fictional country called Gilead with its wicked government. The men keep trying to make women suffer because of the law they made which burden women in every aspect of women's life.

## **I. Methodology**

### **1. Type of Research**

This research is conducted using the descriptive qualitative approach. According to M.D Gall, Joyce P Gall, and Walter R. Borg (2017) the goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. This research is more concerned with what rather than how or why something has happened. Therefore, observation and survey tools are often used to gather data. Thus, Qualitative research is holistic and involves a rich collection of data from various sources to gain a deeper understanding of individual participants, including their opinions, perspectives, and attitudes. Qualitative research collects data qualitatively, and the method of analysis is also primarily qualitative. This often involves an inductive exploration of the data to identify recurring themes, patterns, or concepts and then describing and interpreting those categories.

(Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P., & Borg, W.R. 2007)

Based on the explanation above, the researcher analyzed the novel through text and context-based interpretation. The novel is analyzed by using fictional devices such as characters, plot (conflict), and setting. These elements are related to each other and give contributions in revealing the meaning of the novel. Characters are used to reveal the issue of women objectification. Plot (conflicts), external and internal, is used to figure out the conflict faced by the character. Furthermore, setting function is to show the atmosphere, situation, and condition faced by the character

in the novel. In addition, this analysis deals with the concept of women objectification by Martha Nusbaum.

## **2. Object of the Research**

The object of this research is a novel entitled *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood.

## **3. Technique of Data Collection**

In this research, the data will be collected from the novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood in following procedures:

- a. Reading the novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood.
- b. Sorting the data related to the issue of women objectification experienced by the characters in the novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood.
- c. Identifying the data related to the issue of women objectification experienced by the character in Margaret Atwood's *The Testaments* (2019) by using women objectification theory proposed by Martha Nusbaum.

## **4. Method and Technique of Data Analysis**

The data is analyzed based on women objectification theory proposed by Martha Nusbaum. From this theory, it can be seen that the characters in the novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood are suffering from women objectification.

## CHAPTER III

### CONCLUSION

The issue women objectification towards women in patriarchal society can be revealed in a novel *The Testaments* (2019) by Margaret Atwood. The fictional elements such as character, plot (conflict) and setting contribute in revealing the meaning beyond the novel. This analysis deals with the concept of women objectification by Martha Nusbaum and added by Rae Langton (1985). Women objectification in this analysis refers to how patriarchal system represented by men in government objectify women and subordinate them as they are less person in society. Women objectification can be seen through choice restriction and religion distortion.

In terms of choice restriction, it can be concluded that the actions of objectification include the restrictions in all aspects of life choices. These aspects are the limitations of education, career options, hobbies, and marriage decisions. The character and the setting take a big part in revealing the issue. The setting shows the situation of culture that is being dominated by patriarchal system in order to objectify women. Women are placed and given job as a servant including as a marthas (maid) and handmaids (birth facilitator). Not only the society views women as inferior but also the men's actions are in disguise of religion. They misuse religion and forbid people to know the truth. They use religion as a mask the faith to control all of the aspects of woman's life. They drag the name of god to justify their wicked actions.

The analysis proves that the women are subordinated because of the system strengthened by men. As Marta Nusbaum said in her theory, the treatments

women get are denial of autonomy, silencing, inertness, instrumentality, ownership and fungibility. Men disavow women's autonomy as women have no self determination to make choices and manage their own life. They do not get a proper education to level up their knowledge while men are freely to choose their study. Women are also silenced as they are prohibited to speak up their voices and rights. In addition women's movements are also limited. They cannot go to the office, church, and other places without guard. They can only go to market, hospital, and their own house. They cannot choose whatever they want to do except they are given an access by the men.

Thus, the analysis above proves that the patriarchy system plays a significant change to women's life. Men control women through patriarchal regulation. The regulation occurs in women's career. However, women can only be in four jobs. They are either being an Aunt, Wife, Handmaid or Martha. The classification of those jobs is considered whether the woman is fertile. Those who are fertile will be handmaids to become a birth facilitator for the commander's family. It can be concluded that women have no choice in what she wants to be except accepting what the system gives to them.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anwar, D. (2016). " Finding myself in someone else's land" stories by teachers of literatures in English in Padang: A postcolonial framework (No. PhD.,). Deakin University. Web <http://dro.deakin.edu.au/view/DU:30088934>  
Retrieved on August 28<sup>th</sup> 2020

Atwood, Margaret. 2019. *The Testaments*. Nan. A. Tellese Publisher.

Bikerts, Sven. P.1993. Literature The Evolving Canon. Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon

\_\_\_\_\_. "Definition of women" Web.(1995)The Dictionary of Feminist Theory  
Retrieved on December 16th 2019

\_\_\_\_\_. "Definition of Objectification" Web. (2010) Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.Retrieved on December 16th 2019

\_\_\_\_\_. "Definition of Patriarchal system" (1986) Encyclopedia Britannica.Web.  
Retrieved on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

\_\_\_\_\_. "Natasha Walter's report at The Guardian, *Margaret Atwood's new work is full of feminist hope. But do not dumb it down*" (2019). Web, Retrieved on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2020

\_\_\_\_\_. "Violence Against Women" (2017). Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence. Web. Retrieved on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2020

Doecke, Brenton, Anwar, D & Illesca, Bella. (2017). Narrative Language and Literacy Education Research Within a Postcolonial Framework. Reflections on Qualitative Research in Language and Literacy Education,

2017, Volume 29. Web [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-49140-0\\_3](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-49140-0_3) Retrieved on September 27th 2020

Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P., & Borg, W.R. (2007), *Educational research: An introduction* (8th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Johnson, A. (2005). The gender knot: Unraveling our patriarchal legacy. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Klages, Mary (2006) *Literary theory : A Guide for the Perplexed*. London L. Guerin. Winfred. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. 2005. New York.

Langton, Rae, 2009, *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

—, 2000, “Feminism in Epistemology: Exclusion and Objectification”, in M. Fricker and J. Hornsby (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 127–145.

MacKinnon, Catharine, 1989b, “Sexuality, Pornography, and Method: Pleasure under Patriarchy”, *Ethics*, 99(2): 314–346.

Nussbaum, Martha, 1995, “Objectification”, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 24(4): 249–291

Papadaki, Evangelia. 2012. *Understanding Objectification: Is There Special Wrongness Involved in Treating Human Beings Instrumentally?*. Rowman& Littlefield Publishers.

Sultana, Abeda. 2011. Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis. *The Arts Faculty Journal*.

Szymanski, D. M., Carr, E. R., & Moffitt, L. B. (2011). *Sexual Objectification of Women: Advances to Theory and Research*, 39, 107-126.

Moghadam, M, Valentine. (1992) Patriarchy and The Politics of Gender in Modernising Societies: Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. *International Sociology*.

Murray, Tonita. (2012),*The Oppressed Women of Afghanistan: Fact, Fiction, or distortion*. Middle East Institute. N St. NW, Washington D.C.

Nassaji, Hossein. (2015), Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis. *Language Teaching Research* 2015, Vol. 19(2) 129–132. University of Victoria, Canada.

Walby, S. (1990).*Theorizing patriarchy*. Oxford, London: Basil Blackwell.