

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SELECTED POEMS OF *POSTCOLONIAL LOVE*
***POEM* (2020) BY NATALIE DIAZ**

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ABSTRACT

The aims of the study entitled “Gender-Based Violence in Selected Poems of *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) by Natalie Diaz” was to analyze the issue of gender-based violence and the effects of gender-based violence on women which depicted in the selected poems of Natalie Diaz’s *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020). The object of this study were 5 selected poems which revealed gender-based violence issue. The poem book mostly showed poems that speak about gender-based violence that happen to women in society which makes women experience harmful effects. In addition, the poem book contains implicit messages from the speaker who experience gender-based violence so that women can prevent this from happening in the future. This study used qualitative methods to analyze and reveal the phenomenon of gender-based violence. The data were analyzed through words and quotations by using Naomi Wolf’s (2002) feminism theory and presented in the form of essay. The result of the study showed that gender-based violence depicted in the selected poems was influenced by the position of women who were considered inferior

Keywords: *feminism, gender-based violence, sexual harrasment.*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian berjudul “Kekerasan Berbasis Gender dalam Puisi Terpilih *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) karya Natalie Diaz” bertujuan untuk menganalisis isu kekerasan berbasis gender yang terjadi pada perempuan dan tergambar dalam puisi-puisi pilihan *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) karya Natalie Diaz. Buku puisi ini kebanyakan menggambarkan puisi-puisi yang berbicara tentang kekerasan seksual yang terjadi pada perempuan yang membuat perempuan mengalami dampak buruknya. Selain itu, dalam buku ini juga mengandung pesan tersirat yang disampaikan oleh pembicara dalam puisi yang mengalami kekerasan berbasis gender agar perempuan lain dapat mencegah hal yang sama terjadi di masa depan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis dan mengungkap fenomena kekerasan berbasis gender berupa kekerasan seksual serta efek dari kekerasan seksual yang terjadi pada perempuan. Data yang dianalisis adalah menggunakan kata-kata dan kutipan dari Naomi Wolf (2002) dan dituliskan dalam bentuk esai. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kekerasan berbasis gender yang tergambar dalam puisi-puisi terpilih dipengaruhi oleh posisi perempuan yang hanya dilihat melalui tampilan fisik dan dinilai sebagai objek seksual dari laki-laki yang mana membuat perempuan mengalami kekerasan seksual seperti dierotisasi dan dipaksa berhubungan seksual.

Kata kunci: *feminisme, kekerasan berbasis gender, kekerasan seksual.*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Mexico is an example of a country that has high cases of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence in Mexico happens due to the culture of machismo and marianismo. According to Ramirez (1999), machismo, or the male gender role, defined as having pride in masculinity, creates a feeling of superiority for men and is associated with dominance and aggression. The machismo culture is seen as an expression of male power in which they do not care for what happens to women because they do the actions to show their strength. There is also femicide in Mexico which is an act of murder of women because they are women. In other words, women in Mexico are being killed just for being women. The female gender role or marianismo supposed the ideal true of femininity that women are supposed to live up sexually abstinent. Women must be able to serve

her partner's needs. The idea of machismo leads into a culture of silence for women, like feminine passivity, sexual purity, and self-silencing of women. In other words, women in Mexico are mistreated, and they have no chance to fight themselves because the culture shaped them to keep silent for what happened to them.

Moreover, the term gender-based violence is also reflected in literary works. One of the literary works that describe gender-based violence is a book of poems written by Natalie Diaz entitled *Postcolonial Love Poem*. *Postcolonial Love Poem* is a book of poems that consists of 80 pages and 31 titles of poems. In this book, Diaz describes the autonomy of desire, where pleasure and love are both grief and joy, violence and sensuality. These poems depict a relationship between the speaker who experienced violence and their lover who committed the violence. In this study, the writer chooses five

poems entitled *Postcolonial Love Poem*, *These Hands, If Not Gods*, *From The Desire Field*, *Ink-Light*, and *I, Minotaur*.

The writer chose this book because this book is perfect enough to describe how act of gender-based violence happens and reflects women's feeling about receiving those acts. In this study, the writer is interested in discussing the actions and the effects of violence through the speaker's words in the poems. In analyzing this poem, the writer applied the feminism theory, *The Beauty Myth*, written by Naomi Wolf, to analyze the act of gender-based violence and the effect of violence in this book.

1.2 Statements of Problem

1. How is gender-based violence reflected in *Postcolonial Love Poem*?
2. How is gender-based violence reflected in *These Hands, If Not Gods*?

3. How is gender-based violence reflected in *From the Desire Field*?
4. How is gender-based violence reflected in *Ink-Light*?
5. How is gender-based violence reflected in *I, Minotaur*?

1.3 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is literature that analyzes poetry as an object. The object chosen is a poem book entitled *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) by Natalie Diaz. This study is limited to analyzing the act of gender-based violence experienced by the speaker and how the speaker deals with violence in *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) by Natalie Diaz. The writer focuses on finding gender-based violence actions in the poem.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To describe the act of gender-based violence in *Postcolonial Love Poem*.

2. To describe the act of gender-based violence in *These Hands, If Not Gods*.
3. To describe the act of gender-based violence in *From the Desire Field*.
4. To describe the act of gender-based violence in *Ink-Light*.
5. To describe the act of gender-based violence in *I, Minotaur*.

1.5 Functions of the Study

This study is expected to give an additional understanding of Natalie Diaz's *Postcolonial Love Poem* through a feminist perspective, especially about gender-based violence. For academic readers, this study provides information about the definition of gender-based violence, the act of violence, and its effect on women who receive those acts by others. This study can also be used as a reference and evaluation for other writers who are interested in analyzing related topics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Approach of the Study

In this study, the writer applied qualitative approach to explore the act of gender-based violence and the effects of gender-based violence that experienced by women. Qualitative approach focused on identify and analyze the topic from the selected object. Through the process of identify and analyze the topic from selected object, the meaning behind the data will be found and interpreted. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2007, p.3) qualitative approach involves an interpretative result from the writer in which the writer need to analyze based on their interpretation of the phenomena and the meaning in their object that also happens in society.

3.2 Data Source

The data source used in this study are divided into two types: the primary data were taken from *Postcolonial Love Poem* by Natalie Diaz (2020). The data

taken from the five selected poems, which are *Postcolonial Love Poem*, *These Hands, If Not Gods*, *From the Desire Field*, *Ink-Light*, and *I, Minotaur*. Later on, the secondary data were taken from books and journals to complete the analysis

3.3 Data Collection

In analyzing the object of this study, the writer used some steps. The first step is reading the primary data source which is *Postcolonial Love Poem* by Natalie Diaz to get complete information and better understanding of the book. The second step is deciding the topic or issue in the book that the writer wants to explore. The third step is looking for some journals and books that related to the topic or issue that the writer choose to conduct more information and definition. The fourth step is re-read the primary data source which is *Postcolonial Love Poem* by Natalie Diaz to note the important

details or quotations related to the topic chosen.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the writer analyzes the data by using some steps. The first step is analyzing the narrative elements of poetry to find the act of violence experienced by women and choose the theory book that support the topic. The second step is analyzing the link between the violence found and how it affects the main character. The third step is reading the theory book to support the analysis. The fourth step is arranging the analysis based on the result in the form of essay.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this study, there are 5 selected poems to reveal the acts of gender-based violence and the effects of it. The first poem entitled *Postcolonial Love Poem* contains how women experienced gender-based violence because they are weak in front of their lover. Women are usually give what

they have when they are fall in love which makes her lover feel free to do what they want to her. The second poem entitled *These Hands, If not Gods* talks about how the women are forced to full men's sexual desire, receives violence by being punched or bite, and her pleasure was ignored. The third poem entitled *From The Desire Field* talks about the effect of gender-based violence on women in which they are having problem to take a rest and losing they self-esteem. The forth poem entitled *Ink-Light* contains how men treat women while doing sexual activity. The last poem entitled *I, Minatour* contains how woman feel for being men's object of sexuality.

Furthermore, it is said that the speaker is mostly spoken through the poet's own experience as well as her point of view as woman. There is also a poem which spoken by the men as the superior who do the violence to women. Most of the poems are addressed to young women and women as a way to deliver messages of inspiration of women by using their experiences of

gender-based violence to raise justice for women.

4.1 Gender-Based Violence in *Postcolonial Love Poem*

This sub-chapter discusses the acts of gender-based violence reflected in the first selected poem, *Postcolonial Love Poem*. This poem is a free-verse poem that has no stanza with 41 lines. The speaker of this poem is a woman who received violent acts from their partner. It can be seen as the speaker used I that, refers to herself who experienced violent acts. In this poem, the women talk about how weak they are in the relationship. They believe their partner to give them happiness, but later they only get violence from their partner. The phenomena of violent acts are discussed in this quotation below.

I've been taught
bloodstones can cure a
snakebite, can stop the
bleeding—most people
forgot this when the war
ended. The war ended
depending on which war
you mean: those we started,
before those, millennia ago
and onward, those which
started me, which I lost and

won— these ever blooming
wounds. (Diaz, 2020, p.12)

4.2 Gender-Based Violence in *These*

Hands, If Not Gods

This sub-chapter discussed about the act of gender-based violence in the second selected poem *These Hands, If Not Gods*. This poem consists of eleven stanzas. The lines in each stanza is different. There are three lines in the first and fifth stanza. Two lines in the second, sixth, and eighth stanza. Four lines in the ninth stanza. Fifth lines in the third, fourth, seventh, tenth, and eleventh stanza. The speaker of this poem is the woman as it uses “I” as the pronoun which refers to herself, and there is also the word “breast” as women’s part of body. This poem talked about how women experience gender-based violence in their sexual relationship with their partner. The phenomena of gender-based violence in this poem are discussed in this following quotation.

It is hard not to have faith
in this: From the blue
brown clay of night These
two potters crushed and
smoothed you into being
grind, then curve-built your

form up— atlas of bone,
fields of muscle one
breast a fig tree, the other
a nightingale both
morning and evening
(Diaz, 2020, p.17)

4.3 Gender-Based Violence in *From the* ***Desire Field***

This sub-chapter discussed about the act of gender-based violence in the third selected poem, *From the Desire Field*. This poem consists of nine stanzas. The lines in each stanza are different. The first, third, and eighth stanza of this poem has two lines. The second and fourth stanza has four lines. The fifth stanza has nine lines. The sixth stanza has six lines. The seventh stanza has three lines and the ninth stanza has eight lines. This poem talk about women’s feeling for receiving violence act in their relationship.

I don’t call it sleep anymore.
I’ll risk something new
instead—
Like you lost your rosen
moon, shook it loose.
(Diaz, 2020, p.23)

4.4 Gender-Based Violence in *Ink-Light*

This sub-chapter discussed about the act of gender-based violence in the fourth selected poem, *Ink-Light*. This poem

consists of seven stanzas. The lines in each stanza are different. The first, fourth, and sixth stanza has four lines. The third and fifth stanza has three lines. The second and seventh stanza has five lines. The speaker of this poem is the man who done violence act to women. It can be seen from the word “I” which refers to himself. The words “she” and “her” which is the pronoun for women. This poem talk about how men did the action and their feeling after release their desire to the women.

We moved within the snow-
chromed world. Like-animal.
Like deer.

An alphabet. Along a street
white as lamplight into the
winter,
walking-: like a language, a
new text. I touch
her with the eyes of my skin.

The way I read any beloved-:
from the ramus of the left jaw
down
to the cuneiform of the right
foot. She isn't so much what
she is-:

and becomes herself only
when added to the space
where she isn't.

What is touch-: not the touch
not the hand but the white
heat it
floats through.

(Diaz, 2020, p.45)

4.5 Gender-Based Violence in *I, Minotaur*

This sub-chapter discuss about gender-based violence in the fifth selected poem, *I Minotaur*. This poem consists of fourteen stanzas. The lines in each stanza are different. There are three lines in the first, third, and twelfth stanza. The second, seventh, and thirteenth stanza has six lines. The sixth stanza has five lines. The fifth, eighth, and tenth stanza has four lines. In the fourth and fourteenth stanza, there are seven lines. The ninth and eleventh stanza has nine lines. The speaker of this poem is the woman as the one who experienced violence from her partner. It can be seen from the word “I” which refers to herself as the victim of the relationship. The phenomena of gender-based violence discuss in this following quotation.

The dusked mirage of
lake above your knee
I sip and lick
My tongue blush as
the fluoresced ear of
a jackrabbit.

I obey what I don't
understand, then I
become it,

which needs no
understanding
(Diaz, 2020, p.69)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

After the discussion in previous chapters, it can be concluded that in this study, there are five selected poems to explain gender-based violence which are *Postcolonial Love Poem*, *These Hands, If Not Gods*, *From the Desire Field*, *Ink-Light*, and *I, Minotaur*. The first selected poem, which is *Postcolonial Love Poem* is spoken by the woman as the one who receives violence from the lover. In the poem, the woman describes that she falls too much to her lover and she gives what she has to her lover. The woman accepts that she is the object of her lover's sexuality. She gets bruises from her sexual activity with her lover which makes her feel guilty and shame to show herself to others.

The speaker of the second poem, which is *These Hands, If Not Gods* is

also the woman. She describes that her partner forced them to do sexual activity both morning and evening. The woman says that her partner uses his strength too much when they touch her breasts. She can feel the man's muscle and strong hands on her breasts which makes her feel hurt. Moreover, the woman cannot do anything to fight because she realizes that she has no power in the relationship. She receives what her lover gives to her even she knows it hurts her. Besides touching her breasts harshly, the man also chokes her throat and makes her mouth keep open while he enters his fingers into her throat.

The third selected poem, which is *From the Desire Field* is spoken by the woman. From the poem, the woman describes that she takes a risk for having a relationship with her partner. She cannot sleep after she receives violence from her partner. She lost her pride and gets pain after having sexual activity

with her partner. In the end, the woman says that she is afraid to start her days because she thinks she may be get violence again.

In the next poem, which is *Ink-Light* is spoken by the man as the woman partner in a relationship. From the poem, the man describes that he has no feeling for the woman. He only thinks that the woman is his object to full his sexual desire. He feels proud after releasing his desire with the woman. He looks at the woman with his sensual eyes as he gets seduced when he looks the woman walk towards him, hearing her voice, and observe her body. When having sexual activity, he never cares about the woman's condition and keep force her to fulfill his desire.

In the last poem, which is *I, Minotaur* is spoken by the woman. She describes that the man makes her to sip and lick his vitality until her tongue red and numb. From that moment, the woman cannot feel pleaseure because

she is forced to do it. Moreover, she cannot refuse it because she is too weak.

In the end, the woman feels regret to fall into wrong person and for having wound relationship.

5.2 Suggestions

This study is expected to give the reader more information about gender-based violence, especially for women. The writer hopes that this study will help others to be more careful and taking care of gender-based violence issue that still happen in this time. This study also creates messages for women and men to be wiser in relationships and deliver their feelings carefully. For other students interested in researching the same object as this study, it is recommended to study Postcolonial Love Poem using different theories and issues, especially in how women deal with gender-based violence that they experienced that have not been discussed in this study.

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