

**EFFECTS OF PATRIARCHAL CULTURE TO THE  
PROTAGONIST IN NAWAL EL SADDAWI'S NOVEL  
*WOMAN AT POINT ZERO***

A THESIS

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3 Objective of the Study .....	5
1.4 Scope of the Study.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	5
<b>CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Sociology of Literature .....	6
2.2 Theory of Patriarchal Culture .....	7
2.3 The Effects of Patriarchal Culture.....	9
2.3.1 Violence against Woman.....	10
2.3.2 Subordination.....	12
2.3.3 Sexual Exploitation.....	14
<b>CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHOD .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1. Research Design .....	15
3.2. Data Collection.....	16
3.3. Data Analysis.....	17
<b>CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND FINDING .....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 Analysis .....	18
4.1.1 The Effect of Patriarchal Culture .....	18
4.1.1.1 Violence against Woman.....	18
4.1.1.2 Subordination.....	21
4.1.1.3 Sexual Exploitation.....	25
4.2 Findings .....	26
<b>CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 Conclusion.....	27
5.2 Recommendation.....	28
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	
Appendix I	Biography of Nawal El Saddawi .....
Appendix II	Nawal El Saddawi Literary Works .....

Appendix III	The Summary of the Novel .....
Appendix IV	The Characters of the Novel.....

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **Biography of Nawal El Saddawi**

Nawal El Saadawi, was born on October 27, 1931 in Kafr Tahlah, Egypt. She was an Egyptian physician and writer. Known worldwide as a novelist and women's rights fighter. Her books describe the condition of women in Egypt and the Arab world. Nawal el-Saadawi is well known in Egypt as a writer, novelist and fighter for the rights of women and the working poor. She started writing in 1944 when she was 13 years old. She had published more than forty books, reprinted and republished in Arabic, and widely read in her country and all Arab countries. She had achieved wide international recognition following the translation of his work into over thirty languages. "The Hidden Face of Eve" was the first book to be translated into English by her husband Sherif Hetata, and it was published by Zed Books in 1980.

Nawal el-Saadawi holds more than ten honorary doctorates. Her many awards include the Great Minds of the Twentieth Century Prize awarded by the American Biographical Institute in 2003, the North-South Prize from the Council of Europe and the Inter-Nacional Premium of Catalonia in 2004. Most recently she was 2007 recipient in the USA African Literary Association Fonlon Nichols Award, which is given annually to an African writer for excellence in creative writing and for contribution to the cause of human rights and freedom of expression. Her books are taught in universities around the world. Nawal el-Saadawi now works as a writer, psychiatrist and activist. The latest novel is *Zina, The Stolen Novel* (2008).

## **Appendix II**

### **Nawal El Saddawi Literary Works**

1. Woman at Point Zero (1975)
2. Memoirs from the Women's Prison (1983)
3. I Learnt Love (1957)
4. The Fall of the Imam (1987)
5. Ganat and the Devil (1991)
6. Little Tenderness (1960)
7. The Thread and the Wall (1972)
8. Death of an Ex-minister (1978)
9. Twelve Women in a Cell (1984)
10. My Travels Around the World (1986)
11. On Women (1986)
12. Collection of Essays (1998)
13. She was the Weaker (1977)
14. Love in the Kingdom of Oil (1993)
15. A New Battle in Arab Women Liberation (1992)
16. A Moment of Truth (1959)
17. Ain El Hayat (1976)
18. Women and Neurosis (1975)
19. Breaking Down Barriers (2004)
20. The Death of the Only Man on Earth (1975)

### **Appendix III**

#### **The Summary of the Novel**

Set in the Qanatir prison in 20th-century Egypt, *Woman at Point Zero* is the story of the prison's most infamous prisoner, a young woman named Firdaus. Sentenced to death by hanging for killing her pimp, Firdaus shares her story with a psychiatrist a few hours before she is hung.

Firdaus grew up poor in a rural village. Her father was a lying, greedy man who beat his wife and took food from the mouths of his children. Her mother mostly cared about Firdaus's father and treated her children as afterthoughts. She did make sure to circumcise Firdaus when the young girl started asking questions about where babies come from. Sickness is rampant in their town, and when both of Firdaus's parents pass away, her uncle comes and takes her to live with him in Cairo.

In Cairo, Firdaus flourishes despite her uncle continually sexually assaulting her. She excels at school and receives great grades. Eventually, her uncle marries, and his new wife convinces him to send Firdaus to boarding school. There, Firdaus makes new friends and grows attached to her teacher, Ms. Iqbal, but nothing comes of it. Firdaus graduates second in her class and receives her secondary school certificate. Her uncle and his wife have several children now, and there's no room for her in their household for her. She wants to find work using her secondary school certificate, but her uncle claims that's impossible. Her aunt-in-law convinces her uncle that Firdaus should marry Sheikh Mahmoud, a man 40 years older than she. Firdaus rejects this idea and runs away, but she gets frightened being in the streets alone and returns to her uncle's house the same day. Shortly after this, she is married to Sheikh Mahmoud.

The Sheikh is miserly, gross, and abusive to Firdaus. One day, he beats her so badly that she runs to her uncle's house for protection. Her uncle and aunt-in-law tell her that all husbands beat their wives, and they take her back to Sheikh Mahmoud's house immediately. The Sheikh is furious and meaner than ever to Firdaus. Finally, he beats her so badly that she bleeds; she runs away again, this time to the streets.

Whilst roaming the streets, Firdaus meets a man named Bayoumi, who owns a coffee shop. At first, Bayoumi is kind and calm. He offers Firdaus a place to stay and promises to help her find work. This is a lie, and once Firdaus confronts him and tries to leave, Bayoumi rapes her and sells her body to his friends. One day, she finally escapes and flees to the bank of the Nile River. Sitting there, she meets Sharifa Salah el Dine, a successful prostitute.

Sharifa takes Firdaus under her wing and teaches her to have self-worth. Unfortunately, she also arranges sex clients for Firdaus but doesn't give her any of the earnings. Fawzy, Sharifa's pimp, tells Firdaus of Sharifa's betrayal. Firdaus sneaks out of Sharifa's house and wanders the streets once again until a man picks her up. When the man pays Firdaus after they have sex, it opens Firdaus's eyes to the truth. She realizes that she can take care of herself after all.

Firdaus becomes a successful prostitute, but a man named Di'aa makes her question her life when he tells her she's not a respectable woman. Firdaus quits being a prostitute and using her secondary school certificate to get a job at a company firm. At the firm, she sees how the female employees prostrate themselves to the male bosses to get raises and maintain their status. She realizes that all women are prostitutes in some way—some are just paid more and have more freedom.

While at the firm, Firdaus falls in love with a coworker named Ibrahim. He promises he loves her too, but he's lying in order to have sex with her. Firdaus discovers the truth when he gets engaged to the chairman's daughter. Heartbroken, Firdaus realizes that all men are liars and users. She returns to prostitution, now a hardened businesswoman, and becomes extremely successful. She becomes so successful that she attracts the attention of Marzouk, a powerful and dangerous pimp.

Marzouk forces Firdaus into making him her pimp and takes most of her earnings. He also rapes and beats her. One day, Firdaus is fed up, and she attempts to leave Marzouk. He slaps her across the face, and she slaps him back. He starts to reach for his knife, but Firdaus is quicker and manages to grab it from him. She stabs him to death and realizes that she no longer has fear. She escapes to the streets once more.

In the streets, Firdaus walks with her head held high. She attracts the attention of a wealthy Arab prince, who agrees to pay her two thousand pounds for sex. As they have sex, the prince annoys Firdaus, so she tears up the money he gives her. She then tells him that she is a killer who has no qualms about killing a man. Terrified, the prince calls the police, who take Firdaus away.

Back at the prison, the psychiatrist is floored by Firdaus's story. Before she can say anything, the guards come and take Firdaus away for her sentencing. The psychiatrist leaves the prison and sits in her car, awash in feelings. She realizes that Firdaus is the most courageous person she has ever met.

## **Appendix IV**

### **The Characters of the Novel**

- The journalist- The recipient of the story.
  
- Firdaus- Protagonist character of the novel. The novel displays her journey through life. Firdaus goes through many hardships including a harsh home life, incest, rape and death.
  
- Firdaus' Father- A harsh man who demonstrates the male stereotype in the novel. He is selfish and makes sure that he is served before others. His selfishness even kills off his children.
  
- Firdaus' Uncle- Suggested to have incested Firdaus. He sent Firdaus to secondary school. Later, he sells her to his new wife's uncle.
  
- Miss Iqbal- Teacher at secondary school that Firdaus falls in love with.
  
- Sheikh Mahmoud- Firdaus' husband. Beat her excessively and forced her to have sex. Watched her as she ate to make sure she did not waste food. Ugly older male with whole in his chin.
  
- Bayoumi- rescued Firdaus from the street and treated her well. Eventually turned into the novel's stereotypical male by forcing sex on her and allowing other men to force sex on her.
  
- Sharifa- rescued Firdaus from Bayoumi. She gave Firdaus beautiful clothes and bedding. She became Firdaus' pimp.

- Di'aa- Friend of Firdaus. Tells her that she is not respected because she is a prostitute.
- Ibrahim- Coworker of Firdaus. She falls in love with him and he marries the chairman's daughter breaking Firdaus' heart. Later she says that he used her for free sex.
- Marzouk- Takes over Firdaus as her pimp. She kills him with his own knife after he attempts to stop her from leaving him.
- Prince- Pays Firdaus \$3,000 for sex. He thought she was a princess but calls the police after Firdaus tells him who she really is.