



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**WOMEN'S SUFFERING AND INDEPENDENCE AS SHOWN IN *THE  
MERCIES* NOVEL THROUGH THE LENS OF SOCIALIST FEMINISM**

**MASTER THESIS**

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**Nicosia**

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**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**  
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**2023- 2024**

### Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Luma Rabeea **Women's Suffering and Independence as Shown in *The Mercies* Novel Through the Lens of Socialist Feminism** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

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### **Declaration**

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Luma Rabeea

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Luma Rabeea

## **Abstract**

### **Women's Suffering And Independence As Shown In *The Mercies* Novel Through The Lens Of Socialist Feminism**

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**Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Danish SULEMAN**

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This thesis focused on portraying women's sufferings in the novel *The Mercies* (2020) written by the British novelist Kiran Millwood Hargrave. The novel describes what women were going through in a historical perspective, discussing what happened on a Norwegian island during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Besides, shedding light on the male authority and their behaviors with the female characters, picturing male superiority over women. Also, to find out how Radical Feminism and Socialist Feminism share the same perspectives. According to the findings of the research, different factors contributed to the pain of women. The researcher used qualitative thematic analysis to analyze the data of the study, based on the Socialist Feminism theory which was the theoretical framework, the researcher focused on finding out how women were living in the past and what obstacles were hindering them from being independent and successful without being underestimated along with their rights being taken from them. The researcher was able to analyze and explain the themes that were underlying the challenges those women were facing. According to the data that was selected, female characters were subjected to a variety of patriarchal problems and endured various forms of suppression, like arrests, witch trials, violence, discouragement, underestimation, and even death; nonetheless, they were able to go on with their lives and become independent challenging all the difficulties and proving that women are strong enough to stand by their own in all spheres of life, setting as a good example to the other women to move on and take those difficulties as a motive to succeed.

**Key Words:** socialist feminism, independence, patriarchy, witchcraft, witch hunt.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on women's difficulties as depicted in Karin Millwood's selected novel *The Mercies* (2020). The context of the study, which was based on observations and research into the issue at hand, is presented in this chapter's opening. By outlining the gap in earlier literature on emphasizing women's issues. This chapter also explains the research dilemma. The significance and scope of the study, definitions of the words used in this research are described here. In addition, this chapter also introduces the research questions that guide this study.

#### Background of the study

Women's independence has been a topic of great significance throughout history, with remarkable progress made in recent decades.” Poets, pamphleteers, essayists, novelists, and many public leaders praised women for their participation in the struggle for independence” (Berkin, 2005, p.3) Over the years, women have fought for their rights, challenging societal norms and striving for equal opportunities. From the restrictive roles they once occupied to the present-day pursuit of freedom and empowerment, the journey toward women's independence has been marked by numerous struggles and achievements. By examining the past and comparing it to the present. From the suffragette movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the contemporary advocacy for gender equality and women's rights, women have fought tirelessly to challenge the status quo and secure their rightful place in society. In the past, women's independence was often curtailed by deeply entrenched patriarchal norms and social structures. Traditional gender roles confined women to the domestic sphere, limiting their educational and professional opportunities. In many cultures, women were expected to prioritize marriage, motherhood, and household responsibilities, relegating their ambitions and aspirations to the background. “Women make work at home, look after children and meet the needs of men. Whereas the men are breadwinners, who provide family income and have every decision regarding family” (Uluköy &

Bayraktaroğlu, 2014, p.258) Resources such as historical texts, personal accounts, and feminist literature shed light on the struggles faced by women during this period. For instance, Betty Friedan's groundbreaking book "The Feminine Mystique" exposed the widespread discontent experienced by American housewives in the 1950s and 1960s, sparking a wave of feminist activism. Moreover, the patriarchal society often increased gender stereotypes and discrimination, which hindered women's suffrage efforts. Women faced societal and legal barriers, such as property ownership requirements or literacy tests, designed to exclude them from the electoral process. Furthermore, prevalent beliefs and societal conventions presented women as intellectually inferior and emotionally unstable, which reinforced the perception that they were unqualified for political decision-making. This meant that women were not able to participate in political decision-making. Throughout history, one of the most significant obstacles that women had to contend with was the imposition of traditional gender norms and expectations. Throughout history, women have been relegated to the roles of wives, mothers, and carers because society has imposed the notion that their main function is to discharge domestic tasks. Because of these predetermined gender roles, women were relegated to the private sphere, which was detrimental to their capacity for uniqueness, professional endeavors, and participation in larger community activities.

Due to the social standards and practices that were predominant at the time, women regularly had limited agency and control over their lives. Women were frequently denied the opportunity to make independent choices about education, marriage, and career paths. They were anticipated to submit to the views and desires of male family individuals, such as fathers or life partners, and they were as often as possible denied the capacity to make their own choices. Because of this lack of agency, they were incapable to pursue personal aspirations and contribute fully to society. There were extreme restrictions put on the lives of women as a result of marriage and family obligations. It was regular for women to be married at a young age, and it was anticipated of them that they would put their parts as spouses and mothers ahead of their own individual objectives. As a result of these commitments, their development, freedom, and capacity to seek after occupations outside the house were frequently confined. Their prospects for individual and proficient improvement were restricted

because of the pressure from society to adhere to ordinary family courses of action. There was a need for understanding and control around regenerative well-being in the past, which contributed to the challenges that women had to deal with. It was troublesome for them to plan their kids and make taught choices about their reproductive health since they did not have access to contraception and healthcare related to regenerative well-being. This limitation had far-reaching repercussions, as it hampered their capacity to pursue school, employment, and individual development. It moreover had an impact on their financial circumstances.

As a result of the prevalent traditional expectations of the past, women were primarily expected to fulfill the roles of wife and mother, which diminished their opportunities to get an education. Due to the perception that knowledge was either unneeded or even damaging to women's customary responsibilities, women were often prevented from pursuing intellectual pursuits throughout history. With the assumption that a woman's role was primarily within the realm of home responsibilities, women were restricted in their opportunity to pursue academic and professional accomplishments. (Azuike, 2009, page. 81). Many formal educational institutions, including schools and colleges, were notorious for their refusal to admit female students. A great number of facilities, which were influenced by patriarchal standards, either completely banned women from educational prospects or put major limits on their enrolment. Higher education, in particular, was a domain that was mostly reserved for males, which contributed to the perpetuation of gender inequities and significantly reduced the opportunities for intellectual development for women. The lack of female educators and mentors was another factor that contributed to the difficulties that women faced in obtaining an education.

The absence of relatable figures in academia made it challenging for women to envision themselves pursuing educational and professional paths. The dearth of female role models deprived women of essential guidance, support, and inspiration necessary for their educational and career aspirations. In various periods, legal and institutional barriers further impeded women's educational opportunities. Discriminatory laws, such as barring women from attending universities or prohibiting them from receiving certain

degrees, reinforced the prevailing gender inequalities.” women were considered unsuited for higher education” (Lerner, 1986, p.18) Such restrictions served as powerful obstacles, institutionalizing the marginalization of women and denying them equal access to education.

Women have been subjected to a multitude of impediments and biases in the work over the course of history, which has resulted in the continuous issue of gender discrimination in the work environment. Over time, women were frequently restricted to lower occupations, their business choices were restricted, and they were exposed to unequal treatment as a result of societal traditions and preferences. According to the traditional gender standards, women were anticipated to commit the majority of their time and energy to domestic obligations, which left them with little prospects for professional success. Because of this, women were sometimes confined to low-paying, menial employment, such as working in the textile industry or giving household benefits, which advance contributed to the perpetuation of gender gaps in the work. When women were doing the same obligations or holding positions that were comparable to those held by men, they were usually paid a much lower amount than their male counterparts. Women are not thought to be on an equal footing with male workers since they are not seen as valued in the economic world. As a result, their wage diminishes, and they are incapable of finding conceivable outcomes to accept employment that pays high wages since they are not regarded as appropriate. “The women are always exposed to oppression and violence in both economic and social areas” (Uluköy & Bayraktaroğlu, 2014, page. 361). This wage gap not only represented the underestimation of women's work, but it also hampered their financial independence and maintained their reliance on male family individuals for financial support.

In the past, women were subjected to occupational segregation, which meant that they were coordinated into certain fields of work and businesses that were thought fitting for their gender. Whereas certain occupations, such as engineering, law, and commerce, were accepted to be "appropriate" for men, others, such as teaching, nursing, and clerical labor, were respected to be "fitting" for women (Gagan, 1992, page. 9). Women's career choices were obliged, their access to higher-paying businesses was

limited, and gender-based imbalances in the workforce were reinforced as a result of this segregation. There was a need for support and advantages for women in the working environment, notably concerning maternity leave, childcare facilities, and flexible work arrangements. Because of this need for support, women are regularly constrained to choose between progressing their careers and caring for their families. This highlights the thought that women's commitments as mothers and carers should take priority over their professional goals. Historically, women had limited access to different strategies of birth control, which made them helpless to unexpected pregnancies and hindered their capacity to plan their children. The stigmatization of conversations about contraception happened regularly as a result of societal measures and religious beliefs, which made it difficult for women to have access to and make use of birth control techniques that were reliable. Women's capacity to make taught choices approximately their reproductive health and family arranging was prevented by the absence of accessible contraception strategies. Women have resorted to practices that are not only dangerous but also potentially life-threatening in order to terminate undesired pregnancies since there are no legitimate and secure abortion choices available to them. Women were driven to seek out clandestine operations from people who needed the necessary training or to resort to self-induced abortions as a result of the shame and criminality that encompassed abortion. Moreover, this led to high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity. Women's bodily autonomy was abused, and their lives were put at risk, as a result of the absence of reproductive rights and access to safe abortion treatment. In the past, women were frequently subjected to forms of coerced or forced sterilization, particularly those who came from marginalized areas or were regarded as "undesirable" by the standards of society.

By forcing women into sterilization without their agreement or under coercion, policies, and practices that were implemented by governments or medical professionals stripped women of their reproductive rights. For example, women were subjected to sterilization. The physical autonomy of women was infringed, prejudice was maintained, and their reproductive choices were weakened as a result of these behaviors. In the past, women regularly had restricted access to appropriate healthcare for all aspects of their pregnancy. The need for competent birth specialists, insufficient postpartum care, and



the absence of appropriate medical services all contributed to a rise in the rates of maternal mortality and had a detrimental influence on the health of women. The lack of complete reproductive rights expanded to the sphere of healthcare, which prevented women from receiving the fundamental assistance and resources throughout pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum period.

For a very long time, gender stereotypes and cultural expectations have been predominant factors that have controlled and restricted the lives, opportunities, and individual development of women. "Discrimination due to perceived incompetence is based on descriptive gender stereotypes" (Rudman & Glick, 2001, p. 744). All through the course of human history, women have been subjected to a wide variety of gender-based prejudices and expectations, which have shaped their roles, behaviors, and the value they hold in society. In the past, women were subjected to double standards, which implied that behaviors and attributes that were considered typical or even praised in males were seen unfavorably in females. Women were regularly considered as undesirable or threatening when they exhibited attributes like ambition, assertiveness, and leadership contributed to the perpetuation of the idea that women are inferior. The confidence of women was harmed, their professional development was hindered, and their capacity to question social standards was restricted as a result of these stereotypes of women.

Over the course of human history, women have been subjected to significant limitations on their property rights and legal rights, which have the impact of limiting their autonomy, financial independence, and overall empowerment. Women were frequently seen as second-class citizens by legitimate systems and cultural conventions, which resulted in their being denied equal rights and opportunities from the beginning. With regard to their rights to hold property, women were subjected to critical limitations in many different countries. (Levan & Ukata, 2018) Historically, legal regimes have regularly agreed on male elite authority over property, which includes both material things and land. As a common rule, women were not permitted to inherit or have property in their own names, which contributed to the propagation of financial reliance and limited their

economic capacity and financial security. Women were in some cases prevented in their capacity to participate in legal procedures and were not given equal protection under the law. There was a critical prejudice against women in the legal framework, and their testimonies and voices were usually neglected or ignored.

Women's capacity to exercise their rights, seek legitimate remedies, and contest the injustices they experienced was hindered as a result of the lack of access to justice and fair representation. In numerous cases, the rules administering marital property favored husbands over wives, which contributed to the powerlessness and financial reliance of women within the context of marriage. As a result of coverture regulations, the legal and economic identity of a married woman was absorbed into that of her husband. This implied that any property or assets gained by a woman throughout her marriage would consequently be passed to her spouse, thus decreasing her financial independence and security during the marriage. With the passage of inheritance laws, gender-based discrimination was further strengthened, and women's access to money and property was further limited. The rules of primogeniture, for example, dictated that the only individual who might inherit family property was the oldest son, whereas young girls and more youthful sons were frequently barred from the inheritance process. These behaviors prevented women from having their fair portion of the family legacy, which contributed to the perpetuation of the cycle of financial discrepancies based on gender. The rules governing divorce have continuously been favorable to husbands, which has made it more difficult for women to get a divorce or to secure custody of their children. Women were left unprotected and economically disadvantaged as a result of the fact that divorce frequently resulted in the loss of financial assistance, property, and even custody of children. Due to the presence of these legitimate impediments, women were incapable of escaping abusive marriages or pursuing their own happiness and self-fulfillment in their own lives. Without the consent or participation of a male guardian, females were limited in their capacity to enter into contracts or take an interest in economic activity. This had a negative effect on their rights. Because of this limitation, they were incapable of independently participating in financial transactions, conducting business, or having access to credit. Their entrepreneurial drive, economic mobility, and general confidence in their financial situation were all impeded as a result.

For centuries, women were systematically excluded from the political sphere and denied the right to vote, hold public office, and participate in decision-making processes. (Levan & Ukata, 2018) One of the most glaring manifestations of the lack of political rights for women was the denial of suffrage. Women were often excluded from the electoral process, with their voices and opinions marginalized. Laws and societal norms systematically prevented women from participating in elections and using their right to vote, effectively silencing their political agency and influence. Women faced significant barriers when it came to holding political office or assuming leadership roles. The view that women's obligations were limited to the realm of home responsibilities was strengthened by the perception that women were unsuited for political leadership, which was a result of societal expectations and gender stereotypes.

The capacity of females to impact political choices and contribute to social alter was prevented by the reality that they were seldom allowed to form public policy or represent the interests of their communities. The legal systems that are in place regularly fail to recognize the political rights of women and to offer equal protection under the law. Access to political involvement, including the capacity to join political parties, conduct political rallies, or engage in political activity was commonly denied to women. This included the right to participate in political action. The capacity of females to campaign for their rights and voice their political opinions in a public arena was prevented by the legislative limitations that were in place. Throughout the political field, women were subjected to prejudice and bias based on their gender, which further confined their political rights.

By sustaining the perception that women are emotionally unsteady, cognitively inferior, or lacking the requisite traits for political administration, prejudices and stereotypes have contributed to the perpetuation of this view. The validity of women was damaged as a result of these prejudices, and their prospects of being regarded seriously as political actors were decreased. Since females did not have the right to participate in political processes, their representation and impact in decision-making bodies were seriously limited. The perspectives and experiences of women were generally excluded from numerous political discussions and policy-making processes. The

underrepresentation of females contributed to the perpetuation of a cycle of male-dominated government, in which the issues, needs, and perspectives of women were frequently disregarded or considered irrelevant. In an effort to establish their political and social rights, women initiated the development of socialist feminist ideology. From its inception by women with the intention of achieving their aims, the feminist movement has progressed through three waves, each of which has focused on a particular set of challenges that women confront.

During the latter half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, the first wave of feminism formed, which was a significant turning point in the historical struggle for gender equality. During this time period, women started to question the societal norms that were prevalent at the time and battled for female rights, notably in the fields of suffrage, education, and employment. (Malinowska, 2020) . During the first wave of feminism, which was led by exceptional pioneers such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Emmeline Pankhurst, the goal was to dismantle patriarchal systems that denied women their fundamental rights and opportunities. Protests, advocacy, and organizing were the means by which these pioneers initiated significant discussions about gender injustice. Which paved the way for the following waves of feminism and established a solid basis for the continuing fight for women's rights all over the world.

Second-wave feminism emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, following and expanding on the progress made during the first wave. A focus on women's liberation and struggles for equal rights in all areas characterize this time period. According to (Mohajan, 2022, p. 11), Second-wave feminists confronted reproductive rights, workplace inequalities, domestic abuse, and sexual harassment. Influential women in this era, such as Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Audre Lorde, worked hard to transform traditional home and professional gender norms in order to achieve female self-determination and power. The second wave also brought the notion of intersectionality to light, recognizing that women's subordination was distinct and differed between people based on their race, class, sexuality, and other characteristics. This phase of the Feminist movement was crucial in that it led to significant

consciousness-raising, political organization, and legislative influence, which are crucial in the realization of gender equality and women's rights. Socialist Feminism is another key feminist viewpoint that arose during Feminism's second wave and emphasizes Marxist applications. Capitalism is the main driver of gender inequality and it degrades and utilizes female labor. Package exports infuriate feminists. Economic and other changes are required in a society that achieves a socialist status. Socialist feminists advocate for the destruction of capitalism to create a society in which all people can have equal access to and control over the means to access resources and power, regardless of gender, which was the aim of Socialist Feminism. The views and work of socialist feminists such as Angela Davis, Silvia Federici, and bell hooks played a central role in the history and dissemination of this standpoint, arguing that one cannot achieve gender equality without organizing against class.

In the 1990s, the third wave of feminism was born, which influences modern ideology. It occurred as a reaction to the limitations and exclusion of the second one and emphasized the problem of intersectionality. Consequently, its values included diversity and inclusivity and proved that feminism is not a unitary event. As a result, representatives of different races, cultures, and social classes were invited. The third wave emphasized individualism, women's strength, personal expressions, and empowerment, which was presented in virtual space. Thus, social media and digital platforms often were utilized by the movement for sharing and organizing. (Malinowska, 2020, p,4) Third-wave feminists also worked to expand the definition of gender and challenge traditional binary notions, advocating for the rights and visibility of transgender and non-binary individuals. The third wave of feminism has been essential in the development of a more inclusive and all-encompassing feminist movement and has done so by emphasizing the significance of intersectionality and diversity.

Women continue to encounter obstacles in today's society, despite the fact that previous waves were successful in accomplishing their goals. The historical novel "*The Mercies*" written by Kiran Millwood Hargrave, presented to the public in the year 2020. In this tale, which took place in Norway during the 17th century and is based on actual events, the author dives into the lives of women who live in a secluded fishing town. In

the aftermath of a horrific storm that has ended the lives of every single man in the village, a group of women are left to fend for themselves, taking on tasks and responsibilities that have historically been assigned to males. On the other hand, their newly discovered independence and power posed a danger to the existing patriarchal system, which in turn led to distrust and paranoia. As the women faced accusations of witchcraft, the novel explores themes of female solidarity, resilience, and the oppressive forces that seek to control and suppress them. "*The Mercies*" is a powerful exploration of gender, religion, and the endurance of women in the face of adversity, shedding light on a lesser-known historical period and the struggles women faced during that time. Which makes it the better choice for this study.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem of women's oppression in the past is a critical issue that demands scholarly attention. Despite significant progressions in gender equality and women's rights, women proceed to confront different shapes of oppression and discrimination over distinctive social orders and societies. Understanding the historical roots of this oppression and examining its contemporary manifestations is crucial for developing effective strategies to promote gender equity and social justice. This research aims to explore the patterns, causes, and consequences of women's oppression in a historical context. By investigating the past, we can uncover the systemic structures and cultural norms that perpetuated women's subordination, such as legal frameworks, social hierarchies, and patriarchal ideologies. This historical perspective will help identify the factors that have influenced the continuation or transformation of oppressive practices over time by analyzing *The Mercies* novel. In spite of critical advances in women's rights developments, females proceed to confront challenges such as gender-based violence, limited access to education and healthcare, economic disparities, and cultural biases. Understanding these modern signs is crucial for defining procedures to address the continuous oppression and work toward accomplishing gender equality. By looking at the historical dimensions of women's oppression, this research points to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the components and instruments that sustain gender-based discrimination and how women were able to overcome the impediments and be

independent. The findings of this study will give knowledge to researchers who are interested in feminist issues in the past by observing how women were facing a difficult time in the patriarchal society, and despite the hardness they were able to demonstrate themselves as solid and independent.

### **Purpose of the Study**

In *The Mercies* novel, women battle to get their civil and social rights since the commissioner treats them unjustifiably. and they need to illustrate their freedom. As the novel is historical, the purpose of this research is to outline how, in spite of the treacheries that females have experienced all through history, they have been able to illustrate their freedom and serve as models for other women in the modern world. By utilizing the socialist theory which centers on gaining women's civil and social rights.

### **Significance of the Study**

Let's uncover the mystery quality of women in *The Mercies* novel. This study will examine the oppression of women in the 17th century and the gigantic power of them, as well as how they overcame all of the obstacles to living respectable lives. The novel shows women's current circumstances through a historical image. So, the current study will shed light on women's current affairs at work, at home, and in society. A few of the issues that women experienced in the past still exist today. *The Mercies* novel is the finest option for this research since it demonstrates how strong women can be by depicting how they live without males and survive on their own in a unique historical style. However, the male characters refused the idea of independent women and began to fight them from various angles. This study will be a resource for researchers looking into how and why women were oppressed in the past as there aren't many studies that look at the feminist themes in *The Mercies* novel.

### **Limitations**

This study discussed women's issues as presented in *The Mercies* novel, the limitation was the small number of data, one novel. If the researcher discussed other novels about women's difficulties in the past or made a comparative study with some data from the present, then the result would be more inclusive. Also, the researcher used

Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic approach to analyze the chosen data which was the best choice for the subject of the study and gave the needed result through hard work. The researcher could use data analysis to have more details. The theory used for the current study was the Socialist Feminism theory, the researcher could use other theories regarding women's issues like Marxist Feminism or Liberal Feminism, although the Socialist Feminism theory was the best choice for the study objective and gave the result which was needed to answer the research questions. Despite that, the data of the study was the novel only, but through analyzing it deeply and accurately, the researcher was able to conduct answers to the research questions.

### **Research Questions**

- 1- How was the suffering of women portrayed in the novel *The Mercies*?
- 2- How were women able to be independent in the hardest situations in *The Mercies* novel?
- 3- How *The Mercies* Novel Shows the Radical Feminism Perspective Along With Socialist Feminism?

### **Definition of Terms**

***Socialist Feminism***: According to (Amirault, 2020) is a movement supporting social rights for women. In this study, Social Feminism is defined as a strategy for defending women's social rights.

***Independence***: According to (Nelson, 2002) enabling individuals to be more independent and self-sufficient is the definition of independence. The definition of independence is utilized in this study to demonstrate how women can be successful individuals in a variety of disciplines.

***Patriarchy***: According to (Millett, 1970) Patriarchy is a term used to describe how men rule over women and how they are seen as subordinates by men. In this study, Patriarchy's definition is used to illustrate men's superiority over women.



***Witchcraft:*** Schapera (1994) defined witchcraft as “the malicious use of poison or magic to inflict harm upon people or their property” In the current study witchcraft is defined as the evil actions done by women to harm others.

***Witch Hunt:*** According to Levack ( 2016) witch hunt is arresting women who are accused of being witches and setting a trial for them leading to their execution. In this study, a witch hunt is defined as a cruel action including arresting and killing innocent women by accusing them of being witches.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses previous studies and research on the subject of the study. It presents earlier research and writing on women's issues by academics and writers. The mourning of women and their roles in the patriarchal society was also underlined by several authors, including, Haradhan, M (2020). Surya, S., & Asanti, C. (2022). Amirault, J. (2020) and others. Finally, it covers the theoretical framework.

#### The Importance of The Socialist Feminism Theory in Literature

In Haradhan's study (2020), *An Outline on Feminism and Its Categories*. The author indicates that Socialist Feminism is significant. It analyzes how patriarchy and capitalism are connected to the abuse of women, offers thorough social analysis methods to grasp historical materialism, and illustrates the need for critical thoughts in material examination to understand human affairs. Social Feminists have observed that women's encounters with gender are impacted by socioeconomic inequality. For instance, women from the upper classes may hire women from lower financial status to handle their household chores. To the detriment of other perspectives of women's lives, such as sexuality, violence, or abortion, it places a solid accentuation on the financial aspect of sex difference. As well as, financial independence. This study shows that Socialist Feminism theory ought to be incorporated into literature since it serves as a mirror for women's battles and assists with getting beyond them.

A study done by Surya & Asanti (2022), *The Principles Behind Socialist Feminism Movement Through the Female Characters in Cherry Orchard Drama*. This study showed by utilizing the Socialist Feminism theory the standards behind the Socialist Feminism development through the female characters in *Cherry Orchard* drama. Which explains that four Socialist Feminism standards have been connected to the female characters in *Cherry Orchard's* play who are in a relationship with them after assessing the play using the theory of Socialist Feminism. During the study process, they

are women's positions, roles, rights, and participation, and all of the female characters illustrated that they are based on the previously mentioned concepts. In spite of being incapable of caring for their estate, they supported the Socialist Feminism development. They have shown the domestic conflict that would provide a rise to Socialist Feminism. This study clarifies how courageous women are and how they demand securing their rights under the most challenging circumstances.

Amirault (2020) showed in her thesis named *A Political Strategy for the Liberation of Women: Socialist Feminist Political Practice*. The triumph of Socialist Feminism on a few sides, Socialist Feminists brought different fragments of the women's movement together around striking requests and engaged individuals in diverse and in some cases liberating shapes of activism. In reaction to political parties' disappointment in effectively organizing around 'women's demands,' Socialist Feminists committed themselves to making the development of women from different political spheres. They accomplished this by winning critical triumphs regarding reproductive rights and by making progress in labor development. The thesis outlines how Socialist Feminism is capable and critical for women of all ages and in all places.

Using the Socialist Feminist theory, Newton (2019) inspected the case of high school working-class young women who are compelled by social standards in her paper, "Twenty-First Century Working-Class Girls' Imagined Futures," in which she talked about the state of issues for women nowadays. To comprehend how class and gender are associated with other vectors of identity, the writer's research calls for a re-engagement of Socialist Feminism with the integration of intersectionality. This research illustrates that in spite of the fact that women have made progress in areas like labor and education over a long time, there are still a few issues they confront nowadays that call for Socialist Feminism.

By embracing a Socialist Feminist point of view to study the two oppositely restricted characters Offred and Serena Joy. Jonsson (2018) demonstrated how Atwood's novel offers a critique of patriarchal beliefs through its dystopian depiction of a fictional society in which women are constrained to maintain patriarchal standards and are divided into social classes. In his research named (*Enforcing Patriarchal Values: A*

socialist feminist analysis of the characters of Offred and Serena Joy in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*) The dystopian setting of the book draws consideration to the inconvenient impacts of patriarchal standards. Traditional gender norms, which permit the defense of unjustifiable working and social conditions, support the oppression of women. In Socialist Feminism, the capacity of women to bear children is seen as a kind of generation that can be traded or sold, with males being compared to the bourgeoisie and females to the working class. This study clarifies the underappreciation of women's endeavors and the importance of highlighting these concerns.

The Socialist Feminism theory was employed in the study of El Yazid Iraqi (n.d) Socialist Feminist Reading of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Which is a reading of one of Jane Austen's greatest works, *Pride and Prejudice*. In his study, the author illustrated how Austen battled against men's predominance over women and her refusal to give them the right of choice by expressing in her novel that women had the same legal rights as men, which is a Social Feminist trait. Also, *Pride and Prejudice* advocated for women's right to financial independence. This study divulges that women were seen as commodities without rights, and using the Socialist Feminist theory would enable these women to speak up and fight for their rights.

Jozkowski & Wiersma-Mosley (2017) examined in their research (The Greek System: How Gender Inequality and Class Privilege Perpetuate Rape Culture) public well-being concerns regarding sexual assault on college campuses are widespread. Examining factors specific to colleges that influence sexual assault occurrences and public views of sexual assault is pivotal. The writers contend beneath the lens of Socialist Feminism, that structural and sociocultural perspectives of gender and class privilege on college campuses result from patterns of power and control inside university frameworks, which both cause and encourage sexual assault. The study focuses on the institution-strengthened male-dominated party culture of the predominantly White Greek framework in American universities. The authors discuss how patterns of power and control force and shape current campus gender and class standards, which subsequently support sexual assault. In order to address class and

gender disparities in the breadth of sexual violence on college campuses, by offering recommendations for rules and procedures.

(How do women entrepreneurs strategize growth? An investigation using the Social Feminist theory lens) This study was done by Afreen Huq, Caroline Swee Lin Tan, and Vidhula Venugopal (2019) It explores the key victory characteristics of high-growth female entrepreneurs, clarifying how their gendered development strategies influence them. Utilizing Social Feminist theory as a guide. It provides more profound insights into how women engage in business enterprise and arrange for development by referencing their objectives, abilities, experiences, and one-of-a-kind relevant characteristics and convictions. The study demonstrates how business enterprises can be genuinely advantageous figures in women's lives and enable them to select how to plan for success while maximizing their inherent "feminine" social aptitudes. Through business, women may oversee their own schedules and family commitments while being independent and creative

### **Theoretical Framework**

Literary theory is a field of study that explores and analyzes literature from a variety of critical perspectives and frameworks. It seeks to understand how literature functions, what it means, and how it can be interpreted. Literary theory encompasses a wide range of approaches, each offering different ways of looking at and understanding literature. According to (Culler, 2012, p 78) "Literary theory is not just the theory of the nature of literature but a large body of theoretical writings about things that are important for literature" he mentioned also, "Literary theory encouraged a focus on how language functions, how characters and themes are constructed" (Culler, 2012, p. 80).

In this study, Socialist Feminism theory will be adapted. Concurring with Socialist Feminism, unequal power resulting from societal constructs of gender, race, and class are the causes of women's abuse. It looks at how male dominance and the capitalist class system work together to make the subjugation of women." Socialist Feminism seeks to move beyond the narrow, class-based focus of women in all classes, and looking at the interplay not only of class and patriarchy but, also of racism and

ageism, etc.” (Yeseibo, n.d, p. 118). Socialist Feminism characterizes capitalist patriarchy as the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy that shows itself in the gendered division of labor and society. “Socialist feminism sought to synthesize feminist analyses of gender inequality social reproduction and economic reproduction” (Armstrong, 2020). The theory emphasizes women's double roles in creating and regenerative labor. “socialist feminism aims to achieve equal rights for women with respect to political, economic, cultural, personal, and social spheres” (Jozkowski & Wiersma-Mosley, 2017, p. 2). “Socialist feminism argues that the unequal distribution of resources reinforces men’s positions of power and authority” (Jozkowski & Wiersma-Mosley, 2017, p. 3) “socialist feminism recognizes two basic groups in patriarchal capitalist societies: a powerful group comprising some men and the capitalist class, and a powerless group made up of women and the working classes” (Javaid, 2016). The Socialist Feminism theory is the most fitting one for this research since it clarifies the issues that women confronted in the past by focusing on the oppression of the patriarchal society, and how they were able to be independent.

### **Related Research**

Moss (2020), Jen (2022), Rachel (2020), and Chery (2021) admired the characters and setting in the novel, and the literary dedication to women's lives, careers, and interpersonal interactions. Moss and Jen saw that Powerful men can rewrite history and pervert logic in order to maintain their position of authority at any cost. Evidence of women's strength must be proof of dark magic as it has been decreed that women are weak; “the more a woman survives, the more dangerous she must be”. She found it admirable how *The Mercies* depicts the patriarchal fear of the rationality and might of women. The men in positions of authority are the ones who succumb to panic and superstition, abusing their authority over the lives and deaths of others in order to support their own self-justifying conspiracy theories. Paxson (2020) mentioned that the embrace of women's power is what makes witchcraft appealing. Paxson and Juliet emphasized how women were supporting one another to feel strong and to work despite the circumstances being extremely difficult for them. Paxson said that the fear of having their own power taken away is what drives men crazy. Finally, she described the novel

by saying “*The Mercies* smolders more intensely than a pyre, whirling history's ashes defiantly into the wind”.

McLaughlin (2020) also discussed how women's independence allowed them to take charge of the island after the majority of men died away, and how this independence threatened the authority men, leading them to accuse and execute women on the grounds that they were witches. Expressing sorrow and betrayal of friends in order to protect themselves. McLaughlin and Juliet enjoyed the author's ability to conjure up a place and time, as well as how she vividly portrayed every detail so the reader could feel it. McLaughlin described the novel in these lines “*The Mercies* feels no less emotionally engaging, factually enlightening, thematically resonant and narratively compelling as a result. She breathes life into the experiences of those too often relegated to mere statistics”. While Juliet said” Her writing brings the cold and wildness of the island to life, the rugged landscape and the spray of the sea. The characterizations are wonderful, full of life, and endearing” Conversely, Massie (2020) describes how the author patiently developed the events that are drawing readers in for what is to come. She also touches on how powerful men committed bad deeds by killing women in the name of religion. “she recognizes that they believe they are rooting out impurities and evil in the name of the Lord”.

Lau (2020) saw that *The Mercies* is a timely warning to those who are engaging in harmful discussions about witch hunts on social media without having sufficient knowledge of the topic. Lau and Jen admired how the author used the characters Maren and Ursa to illustrate the suffering of women and how they faced challenges due to society and men. For Lau perhaps the most distressing aspect is the portrayal of women rising against other women. In the review of Barton (2020), she said “The novel delights not with surprise, but by pursuing its course of action with precision and purpose” Additionally, she liked the novel's topic, writing style, and timing. According to Donovan (2020) With its dramatic backdrop and insightful portrayal of the ripple effects of extremism through the eyes of a well-developed cast of individuals, *The Mercies* is a superb piece of historical fiction. For Shepperson (2020) Millwood Hargrave's prose is excellent, engrossing the reader even as the events recounted become

increasingly horrible. She describes the sights and scents of rural 17th-century Norway, including the smell of a burning whale, in contrast to the herbs the women use in their baths. The horrifying witch hunts, which have been reduced to dry historical facts in schools, are given life by the mix of the feminine perspective and the in-depth, nauseating depiction. In the review of Murad (2020), she discussed the ways in which women vary from men, such as how they waited for summer to bury their dead men's bodies and how they felt deeply saddened by the terrible treatment of women by men in positions of authority.

Macmillan (2020) observed that the author investigated friendship, love, community and society, and power—particularly patriarchal power—particularly patriarchal power—using historical moments. All things considered, *The Mercies* is a masterfully crafted tale with frightening surroundings and deep characters. Barbara (2021) saw that Hargrave skillfully blends the historical details of life in 17th-century Norway with the social and theological subjugation of women. She describes a wide range of features of village life, including jobs that are typically performed by men and women. We can also learn about the function of religion and the church in day-to-day living. For Walker (2021) Hargrave's description of Vardo's surroundings is incredibly captivating. Additionally, Hargrave does an absolutely amazing job of capturing life's little pleasures without ever feeling trite. In *The Mercies*, tasks like cooking, cleaning, and fishing acquire a certain subtle beauty of their own.



## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

#### Introduction

This chapter depicts how the current study is carried out. It clarifies the methodology and research strategy that were applied to the data collection and examination. It begins by outlining the research design and the methods utilized for gathering and analyzing data. This chapter's sections highlight how the chosen strategy addresses the research challenge and meets its objectives. This study particularly looks for revealing and examining the causes of the misery experienced by females in the chosen novel and how they were able to survive. As a result, this involves a basic examination of texts utilizing qualitative thematic analysis to distinguish and examine the issues causing these women's suffering.

#### Methodology

“Methodology refers to the choices made about the problem definition (topic) and methods (techniques) of data collection and analysis. It is used as an umbrella term to indicate the theory and account of how research is, or should be, carried out” (Aspers & Corte, 2019, p. 5)

To address the predetermined research topics for this study, the researcher must look into the factors that influenced the lives of the novel's central characters. The researcher employed the thematic analysis technique to conduct a thorough analysis of the novel, with an emphasis on the issues and life events of the key characters. This allowed for an investigation of the main characters' experiences, including discrimination, violence, patriarchy, and so forth. It entails a critical examination of both the Socialist Feminism theory and the patriarchal topic. Also, by applying the qualitative approach. Socialist Feminism holds that women were oppressed because of power disparities brought about by racial, class, and gender stereotypes in society. It examines the ways in which the capitalist class structure and male domination combine to oppress women. The relationship between capitalism and patriarchy that is reflected in the gendered division

of work and society is known as capitalist patriarchy, according to Socialist Feminism. The responsibilities that women play in creating and reproducing work are highlighted by the idea. The main themes discussed in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter are injustice and oppression, violence, and women's union. under patriarchy and women's independence. Discussing how women were oppressed by male characters, which resulted in the witch trials, and how their strength overcame these difficulties.

### **Research Design**

The research design establishes the framework of the study and connects all of its components. It gives the researchers the chance to thoroughly analyze the research and organize their strategy for conducting it. Study designs aid in defining the nature and structure of a study by providing a methodical approach to investigating a scientific subject. "research design refers to the many ways in which research can be conducted to answer the question being asked" (Marczyk, et al., 2010, p. 22). According to Asenahabi (2019). The research design is a reflection of the researcher's thoughts. By connecting the research through a structural plan that demonstrates how all the important components of the research collaborate to try to answer the research questions, it helps to avoid dissatisfaction. The current study is qualitative research, as described by Creswell (2013). The purpose of qualitative research is to investigate and comprehend the meaning that individuals or groups attach to a social or human circumstance. attempting to collect information and data from the selected novel through thematic analysis.

### **Qualitative Research**

"Qualitative methods' is a broad term that can be applied to a range of research approaches that have their theoretical origins in a range of disciplines including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, social psychology, and linguistics" (Moriarty, 2011, p. 2). Qualitative research method is utilized to explore the intricacies of human experiences, emotions, and social phenomena "Qualitative work is often focused on particular individuals, events, and contexts" (Gerring, 2017). A nuanced investigation of meanings, interpretations, and context is possible with qualitative approaches. Finding

the subtleties of characters, ideas, and narrative structures in literature is one area in which qualitative research is most useful. Researchers can capture the different perspectives and subjective interpretations that add to the diversity of literary works using methods including focus groups, interviews, and thematic analysis. By utilizing qualitative approaches, researchers can gain more profound information about the cultural, historical, and social settings that affect the generation and gathering of literature, going past shallow perceptions. Meaning interpretation is the center of qualitative research. Researchers who focus on qualitative approaches are captivated by how people see and comprehend different occurrences, as well as how they make meaning of their surroundings. Aspers & Corte (2019) Literary academics can better understand and appreciate human stories by deciphering their complex narratives through the use of the qualitative paradigm.

“qualitative methods take an holistic perspective which preserves the complexities of human behaviour.<sup>2</sup> A qualitative approach - interviews, observation of activities, interpretation of written material - is most revealing when the variables of greatest concern are unclear. The focus may range from a single individual or small group, such as the interaction between a health professional and a patient, to the functioning of a large organisation, such as a hospital.” (Black, 1994, p. 425)

Research problems can be approached in a variety of ways by using qualitative methods. They provide a way to investigate several levels of analysis; they accommodate diverse disciplinary viewpoints, presumptions, and objectives; and they provide choices in terms of analytical methodologies. Morse (1999). Qualitative research helps and guides in making a strong report about the characters, setting, storyline, and other literary devices since it permits more noteworthy opportunity and adaptability in analyzing any literary content. In addition, it gives a gathering for insightful debate between scholars and scholastics to further understand the authors' writing. It gives researchers the chance to investigate and evaluate the chosen text or book in light of the predetermined goals or research questions for the suggested study. Suleman (2021) Qualitative methodology was chosen for this study because it best

answers the research questions. It provided the chance to read the novel carefully, and to investigate, examine, and evaluate it. As a qualitative researcher, it's important to look closely at the characters' experiences with their issues, struggles, and life events. The researcher can also ask herself as a reader to look for data that was hidden in the words and phrases of the chosen text.

### **Sample of the Study**

The chosen sample for the current study is *The Mercies* novel (Hargrave, 2020) which talks about the injustice that women faced in the past and how they were strong and independent in the most difficult situations in a beautiful historical image, the reason for choosing this novel is that it mimics the present time and reflects how women can be independent in all times and under the hardest conditions. And by explaining what women went through and how they survived in the most difficult circumstances, it will serve as a good example for women in the present time to move on and face challenges.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

“Data collection: how you gather the information you will use” (Maxwell, 2009, p. 234). According to Maxwell (2013) Even in a professionally conceived study, data collection procedures will nearly certainly go through a stage of centering and alteration to deliver the information required to reply to the research questions and address any conceivable validity risks to these answers. Suleman (2021) mentioned in his study that the objective of data collection in qualitative research is to give evidence for the inspected subject. The researcher analyzes this evidence to come up with a basic answer for the examined subject. Data is gathered based on its substance concerning the women's issues presented in the quats of the chosen novel to meet the study's objectives.

In order to carry out this kind of research, the researcher employed the flowchart's procedures as a tool for gathering data, adjusting them based on the information found in the chosen novel.

Figure 1

*Data Collection Procedure*

Identifying Source of Data	<i>The Mercies</i> Novel
Identifying the case of the study	To draw attention to the aspects that contribute to women's suffering and their survival in the Selected novel
Selection of sample	Searching for extracts from the novel that emphasize Women's difficulties using the thematic analysis by Braun and Clark (2006)

As appeared in the above Figure 1 the researcher has looked for the novels suitable for the study on women's issues and decided to select *The Mercies* novel written by Kiran Millwood. To gather information for this research, the following stage was to decide which case would be examined. So as to identify the causes of the sufferings of women in the chosen data, the researcher created study objectives.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

“Thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning (‘themes’) within qualitative data” (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 1). Thematic studies concentrate on finding and characterizing implicit and explicit concepts within the data, or themes, rather than only checking explicit words or expressions. Codes are made to reflect recognized themes and connected to raw data as summary identifiers for further research. Guest, G. et al (2011). Within the range of

qualitative analytical approaches, TA is special in that it gives a strategy or an instrument or method that is not limited by theoretical systems, as restricted to a methodology, which is a research framework that is theoretically informed yet constrained. Clarke & Braun (2017)

The qualitative thematic analysis for this study will be based on six steps as mentioned in Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis study. The steps are:

- 1-Familiarizing with the data.
- 2- Generating initial codes.
- 3- Searching for themes.
- 4- Reviewing themes.
- 5- Defining and naming themes.
- 6- Producing the report.

### ***Familiarizing with the Data***

The researcher read the novel several times to become acquainted with the storylines, settings, elements, and other features of it before starting to analyze it. Taking notes or coding ideas while reading is a recommended practice, as demonstrated by the researcher. After completing this, the researcher is able to do an initial analysis.

### ***Generating Initial Codes***

This stage started when the researcher looked through and got to know the data, coming up with a preparatory list of concepts about what was contained in the data and what made it exciting to investigate. Following that, this stage required making the first codes, or themes, from the data. The following are a few key suggestions for this stage: a) code for as numerous potential themes/patterns as possible (time permitting) – you never know what might be interesting later; b) code information extricates comprehensively, meaning that, if important, hold a small bit of the encompassing information; c) keep in mind that you can code individual data extracts in as many distinctive „themes“ as they fit into, meaning that an extract may be uncoded, coded once, or coded many times, as relevant. (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Support was given as

required amid the iterative coding process. Ideas and problems were coded once notes were put down. The following themes were covered in the initial readings:

- I. Men's Empowerment over Women.
- II. Injustice Against Women.
- III. Women's Independence.
- IV. Oppression
- V. Violence
- VI. Racism

### ***Searching for Themes***

This step begins once the data set has been completely coded and compiled and the researcher has a list of the different codes the researcher found. Sorting the various codes into prospective themes and compiling all the relevant coded data extracts within the themes that have been distinguished from this phase, refocuses the study at the broader level of themes rather than codes. Essentially, the researcher begins to analyze the codes and consider how diverse codes may combine to frame an overarching theme. At this point, the researcher might also have a collection of codes that do not seem to fit anywhere. It's okay to establish a "theme" named miscellaneous to temporarily store the codes that don't appear to fit into the major themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes are:

- I. Men's Empowerment over Women.
- II. Injustice Against Women.
- III. Women's Independence.

### ***Reviewing Themes***

This stage began with the researcher developing and refining themes. It became clear during this stage that not all of the themes were themes at all. Other themes blended together with one another. It was necessary to divide other themes into individual themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase included two levels of topic refinement and review. The first step entailed examining coded data extracts. This required the researcher to examine if the compiled extracts for each theme seemed to

form a cohesive pattern after reading them all. A comparable method, including the whole information set, was utilized in the second level. The analyst took into account whether the topical outline precisely reflected the implications apparent in the information set as a whole, in expansion to assessing the legitimacy of person subjects in association with the information set. In this stage, the researcher examined the whole information set once more for two reasons. As previously mentioned, the first step was to determine if the theme fit the data set. Secondly, to code any more information contained in themes that were overlooked in previous iterations of coding. Since coding was a continuous process, it was expected that the data set would require re-coding. By the time this phase ended, the research had established a clear understanding of the many themes in the novel, how they related to one another, and what challenges and problems they represented with reference to the female characters in the chosen data.

### ***Defining and Naming Themes***

This strategy was used after the researcher had a sufficient thematic map of his data at her disposal. In this step, the researcher reviewed the information that was included inside the topics that he supplied for analysis, as well as described and further refined the themes that he offered for study. Through the process of establishing and refining potential themes, the researcher was able to pinpoint the essence of each theme and determine which excerpts of the data were captured by that subject. In addition to the data from the study, the researcher organized the data extracts for each topic in a way that was consistent and easy to understand. A comprehensive inquiry was required of the researcher for each individual topic, and this was something that needed to be highlighted. It is essential to take into consideration how each theme fits into the broader framework of the researcher's data and research question(s) in order to guarantee that there are no overlapping themes. In order to do this, the researcher was required to independently consider each of the notions and assess them in relation to the others.

### ***Producing the Report***

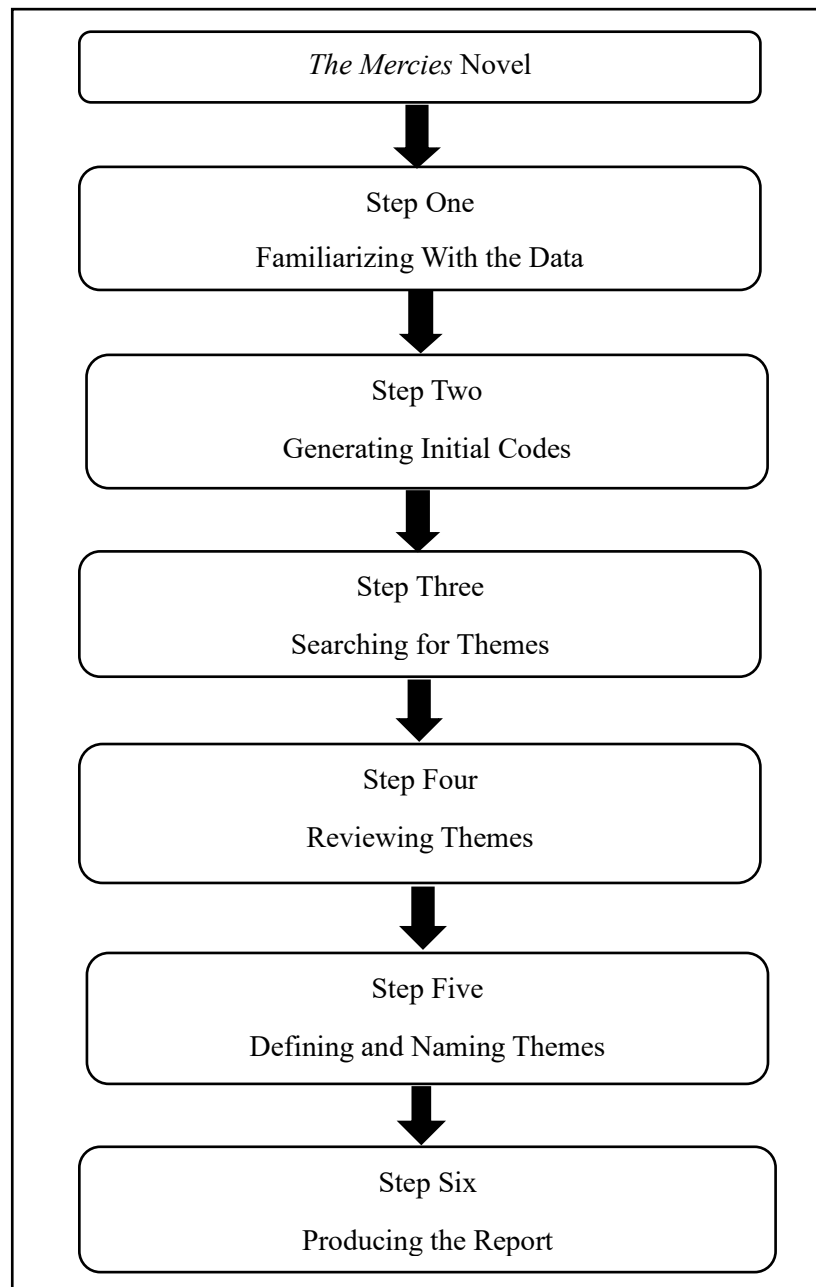
The researcher began the final phase of this examination using a set of fully developed themes. The final conclusion of the thematic analysis of the available data has



to be presented in order to persuade the reader of the analysis's validity and usefulness. The analysis, which included the data extract, had to present the story that the data revealed, both within and across the themes, in a way that was clear, logical, succinct, and engaging. The steps involved in applying Braun and Clarke's Thematic Approach Process (2006) are depicted in Figure 2 below.

Figur 2

*Thematic Analysis Steps By Braun & Clarke (2006)*



## CHAPTER IV

### Analysis

#### Introduction

This chapter explains the reasons behind women's agony in *The Mercies* novel. By choosing four main characters to be analyzed under the suffering of women in the patriarchal society and how they were able to be independent, the chosen characters in the novel are (Diinna, Kristen, Marin, and Ursa). The summary of this chapter is written in the end.

#### How Was The Suffering Of Women Portrayed In *The Mercies*

To answer the first question of the research the main themes behind the suffering of women are discussed below.

#### Obstacles Faced by Diinna in the Novel

*The Mercies* novel describes the injustice that women faced in the patriarchal society from the men in power to restrain those women from moving on in their lives after the death of their mean in the storm. Diinna was one of those women and she was strong enough to survive and save her life. In order to answer the research questions, this part will discuss the reasons for the suffering that Diinna faced and how independent she was under patriarchy and women's independence.

#### *Patriarchy*

Patriarchy is one of the important themes under the Socialist Feminism theory which is embodied in male dominance, oppression, injustice, and violence. Those issues were faced by women in the novel. In this section, those issues will be discussed regarding Diinna's life.

**Injustice and Oppression.** Diinna faced a hard time with the oppression and injustice from men in power as it's shown below.

*Injustice and Oppression under the Name of Religion in Diinna's Life.*

*“We will have a Lensmann there, Hans Kønig. He is under direct orders from King Christian, and will be making great changes, Pastor Kurtsson says, with new strictures on kirke-going.’ Toril looks directly at Diinna. ‘And he is looking to settle the Lapps and bring them to God” ( Hargrave, 2020, P. 34)*

Lapps are mentioned for the first time in this quotation “The Lapps are a small group. of people, about 33,000 in all, widely scattered over an enormous territory in the northern part of the Fenno-Scandian peninsula. They come under the dominion of four countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia” (Allison, 1953). In the novel Lapps are portrayed as magicians who are doing evil things to hurt people and the authorities are looking for them to trial under the name of religion, and as Diinna is a Lapp she is under the threat of death for nothing, just because she is a Lapp. Here is the oppression and injustice shown in Diinna's condition, to face death just for her origin and the common notion about it.

*“says Kirsten, watching Mamma's back. Maren shakes her head. 'You should have made her come.' 'I can't make her. I tried.' 'You should have tried harder,' says Kirsten. 'Edne managed to bring her father though he is nearly blind. The census... She lowers her voice. 'It would be good to have her say her own name. Especially with the killings at Alta and Kirkenes.' 'Killings now?' Maren feels a chill steal across her neck. 'Three Sámi, all weather-weavers.' 'But Diinna doesn't —' 'It doesn't matter much what Diinna does, only what she is. This Lensmann, he is determined to put a stop to the old ways” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 158)*

In this conversation between Maren and Kristen about Diinna that she should go to the Kirke to prove herself innocent of witchcraft but, she refuses to go, and Kristen is making it clear that it doesn't matter if she is doing any magic, what matters is she is a Sami or a Lapp. This reason is enough to accuse her and eventually trial her. It's clear here how men in power are unjust and accusing innocent people of things they didn't do under the name of God and religion although it's not near to religion and ungodly to kill those women for false assumptions.

“more men dressed in black, looking for Diinna and her son” (Hargrave, 2020 p. 279)

After the talk that was heard about Diinna and the possibility of arresting her, she escaped taking her son with her, the night she escaped, they came to take her according to the orders from the men in power, but she was gone, and they were looking for her. Although she escaped and the men in power know that she did do nothing harmful, they are still after her intending to trial her, which is a huge injustice.

**Violence.** Diinna encountered violence from women as it's explained in the coming section.

***Violence Against Women by Women in Diinna's Life.***

*“If what Edne says is true, it was sent.’ ‘Sent?’ says Sigfrid, and Maren sees Kirsten turn a thankful eye upon her, thinking she has found an ally. ‘Such a thing is possible?’ A sigh comes from the back of the kirke, and the whole room turns towards Diinna, but she tilts her head back, eyes closed, the brown skin of her throat gleaming gold in the candlelight. ‘The Devil works darkly,’ says Toril, and her daughter presses her face beneath her shoulder, cries out in fear. Maren wonders what terrors Toril has woven into her two surviving children these past three days. ‘He has power set above all but God’s. He could send such a thing. Or it could be called” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 9).*

The women of Vardo accusing Diinna of sending the storm by witchcraft, they were guessing if the storm was sent by evil work and looking at Diinna, in a suspicious

way, although they knew she hadn't done anything like that before and she is not dealing with witchcraft.

*“But Diinna disappears the day after Dag and Erik are brought back. Mamma is frantic that she has left to bring up the child with her Sámi family. She says some awful things, things that Maren knows she doesn't mean. She calls Diinna a Lapp, a whore, a savage, things Toril or Sigfrid might say. ‘I always knew it,’ Mamma weeps. ‘I should never have let him marry a Lapp. They are not loyal, not made like us”*  
(Hargrave, 2020, P.14)

Mamma turns against Diinna once she left after her husband is brought back, despite her being one of their family and the mother of their grandson, Mamma regrets letting her son marry Diinna because she is a Lapp and not like them. In this part, the writer shows that there is violence inside the one family, by women. Instead of supporting Diinna for being a single mother, Mamma is turning against her in a very bad way as she underestimates her, curses her, and calls her a Lapp as if it's a shame to be one.

*“She has been speaking of you. Speaking unkindly.’ ‘What does it matter?’ ‘She said you and Erik were not married, not truly.’ Pain crosses Diinna's face. She puts an end of her hair into her mouth, sucks upon it. ‘She was there, she saw us marry.” ‘She called it - Maren lowers her voice so Mamma will not hear - ‘a devilish union.’ Diinna shrugs. ‘She has always been like that. Even when we were children. She threw a hot potful of water at me once.’ Her hand goes to her shoulder where the scar tissue sits like lace across her shoulder, and Maren remembers at last that it was indeed Toril who inflicted it. ‘Why are you coming to me with old tales?’ ‘But this is no idle chatter,’ says Maren. ‘She has the ear of the commissioner now. He sits with her most days to pray”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 188)

Toril (one of the women in Vardo) turned against Diinna as Mamma did, she questioned her marriage and calls it devilish, and Diinna remembers an old accident that happened with her made by Toril to prove that she hated her since they were children, also she was aggressive. That shows the violence that Diinna faced from women at a very young age.

**Betrayal.** One of the difficult situations Diinna had faced is the betrayal of the family, It's under discussion below.

***Family Betrayal in Diinna's Life.***

*"The commissioner and his wife have been here a week, but the stitched pelts are still folded ready by the door of Maren's house. Their exchange with Commissioner Cornet made her uneasy, though Maren knows it could have been worse: she might have been too slow to stop Mamma mentioning the drum"* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 142)

In this part, Marin is afraid that Mamma would tell the Commissioner about the drum Diinna used for the burial of her husband as they do in her tribe, which is considered to be a wrong deed for Vardo people. Mamma knows Diinna is away from sorcery but she is trying to hurt her by telling the Commissioner about things he will not like and eventually trial her. This is a clear betrayal from Mamma to Diinna.

*"And you would let them take Diinna too? Leave your grandson without a mother?" 'Better no mother at all than a witch.' The knock comes into Maren's stunned silence, and Ursa is the only one who moves when it comes again, harder this time. Absalom is there, his eyebrows rising. 'You are here, wife?' He strides inside. The remaining air is squeezed from the room. 'Where is the Lapp?' 'Next door,' says Maren's mother, standing slowly. 'I will show you, commissioner. My grandson may be upset. I will keep him safely'"* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 278)

The commissioner and his men are coming to take Diinna and Mamma is pleased about it, preferring her grandson to be without a mother than having a witch mother

(Although Diinna is not a witch) Mamma even helps them to reach her by showing them the way to her room. Another image of betrayal within family members.

*“visible, showing beneath the whitewash like scars. She could go back to the meet, but the poison Toril had spread about the room remained. Mamma never used to like Toril, but recently Maren thinks that has changed. She noticed the look of satisfaction on Mamma’s face as Toril delivered her speeches, and at Diinna’s departure. Toril was always against the Sámis visiting the village”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 208)

The hatred of Mamma toward Diinna is shown in this part when she started to like Toril though she didn’t use to, just for the reason that Toril is saying bad things about Diinna which pleased Mamma. So, instead of defending her daughter-in-law, Mamma is allying with her enemies, another face of betrayal.

### **Obstacles Faced by Kristen in the Novel**

Kristen is the most powerful and reliable woman, she was helping the other women to go forward and continue their lives bring food, and do the other activities they used to do before the storm. But all her efforts were wasted, she had a bad luck with the women of Vardo, they accused her of being a witch, although she was not, and then she was arrested and burned in the witches' trial. In this part, those issues will be discussed under patriarchy and women’s independence in Kristen’s life

#### ***Patriarchy***

Patriarchy is one of the important themes under the Socialist Feminism theory which is embodied in male dominance, oppression, injustice, and violence. Those issues were faced by women in the novel. In this section, those issues will be discussed regarding Kristin’s life.

**Injustice and Oppression.** Kristen went through hard times because of the men in power, it's explained in the coming section.

***Oppression of Men in Power in Kristen's Life.***

*“Kirsten shows them how to work them (the nets) into a fold that can be opened easily. ‘How do you know this?’ says Edne. ‘My husband taught me.’ ‘Why?’ says Edne, shock apparent in her thin voice. ‘Just as well he did,’ snaps Kirsten. ‘Now the next.’ “They are watched on all sides from windows and most keenly from the doorway of the kirke. Pastor Kurtsson’s slight frame is backed by the brightness of candles and the wooden cross glowering behind. They are being judged, unfavourably at that”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 36)

As Kristen was teaching the women how to use the nets for fishing, Pastoe Kurtsson was watching them and he didn't like what Kristen and the other women were doing, despite the fact that they were just bringing some food by fishing, after the death of the men in Vardo, women had to do the fishing themselves, but that was not a good thing for Pastor Kurtsson. This part of the novel mirrors how men in power are against the women of Vardo although no one of them did anything wrong, they were judged only for fishing which is unfair, without food they will die, but still, the male character didn't like it.

*“As they reach it, there is the sound of raised voices, and they round the house in time to see the same group of women who watched Fru Olufsdatter be led away gasping and parting as the solid, unmistakable figure of Kirsten shoves another black-clad stranger full to the ground. ‘Kirsten!’ cries Maren. She straightens, hurries forward. ‘What are you doing?’ ‘This dritt thinks he can lay hands on me.’ ‘He is the commissioner’s man, the Lensmann’s guard!’ ‘He is not my husband,’ says Kirsten, looming over the man, who is skidding backwards on his heels. ‘And should not touch me”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 280).



The commissioner has sent his men to arrest Kristen for the crime of witchcraft, apparently from her reaction they have touched her in a bad way and she defended herself by pushing them away, male violence, oppression, and injustice are shown in this quotation.

“They cannot hurt them,’ says Ursa. ‘Not for nothing.’ ‘You know they can,’ says Maren” (p. 285)

Talking about Kristen and Fru Olufsdatter after they have been arrested for the crime of sorcery. Ursa is saying that with no evidence no one can hurt them, but Marin is assuring that they can hurt them even if they are innocent. This is a very clear sentence to prove the dominance and injustice of the men in power against women.

*“They see Kirsten's chest begin to heave, the smoke swirling about her head, tears and sweat pouring down her face. She is speaking words they can't hear and Ursa feels choked, as though her own lungs are filling with hot, acrid smoke, and Maren's nail breaks through her skin as Kirsten gives out a strangled cry and breathes and breathes and breathes. A smell is coming on the wind now, meat and wood and hair, all of it burning, and at last Kirsten falls forward on her ropes and is still”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 325).

These are the last minutes of Kristin’s life which is ending unfairly, the author describes her death in a sad way by mentioning how Marin and Ursa are feeling pain for the injustice Kristen was facing. Finally, her life ended just to prove that the men in power can do whatever they want and no one can judge them, also to prove that they are the powerful side and they can control the lives of women, on the other side, it’s not acceptable for women to be strong and independent.

*“Breathe deep!” it says again, and this time Ursa follows the thread back into a crowd of kirke-women. It cannot be Sigfrid, who only two days previously sat baying as Kirsten was accused of cursing her? But Ursa*

*sees Sigfrid call again, tears on her cheeks, and Toril cries out too“*  
(Hargrave, 2020, p. 325)

“They have lied. Edne and Toril, all of them lied. And no one defended her” (Hargrave, 2020, p.319)

After being accused by women including Sigfrid and Toril, in Kristen's trial, those women are trying to tell her to breathe the smoke so she faints before she burns, which means they feel sorry for her, and they accused her of nothing. Also, when Marin said “they have lied” this proves Kristen was not a witch, but a normal woman who has been under treachery and injustice.

**Violence.** Kristen had faced violence in multiple ways as it’s explained below.

***Violence of Men in Power in Kristen’s Life.***

*“voices held in check only by the Lensmann’s admonishments. On more than one occasion Ursa sees someone reach through the rails and pinch her, but Kirsten barely reacts. It is as if she is asleep, her eyes half closed, mouth slack. What more have they done to her, to reduce her so?”*  
(Hargrave, 2020, p. 316)

The description of Kristen's condition in this quotation is so painful, she is in a miserable shape, obviously, she has been treated in a very bad way, not to mention the people who are trying to reach her like the one who pinched her, as they are punishing her for things she didn’t do.

*“They asked her to confess her crimes, and she wouldn’t. So they are to test that she is a witch and should be sentenced as one.’ A feeling of foreboding crosses Maren’s neck, like the bird dark at the window before the storm. ‘How?’ ‘They will bind her, and put her in the sea.’ ‘In the sea?’ Maren feels her tongue slow in her mouth. ‘It is freezing. She might drown!’ ‘It may be better if she does.’ Maren gapes at her. ‘How can you say such a thing?’ ‘If she floats, they will say she is a witch. They say*

*water is pure and repels the Devil, and so those who float are witches”*  
(Hargrave, 2020, p. 302)

A very cruel and ugly way the men in power used to prove that Kristen is a witch was to throw her into the sea, and if she didn't die that means she is a witch, words are not enough to describe how this situation and decision is awful, how bad they are treating women with no crime unless surviving by their own without the need of men, this part embodies the oppression and hostility of men over independent women.

*“Kirsten is clad only in a cotton dress, skirt dark with stains. Her eyes are shut even as guards and the commissioner haul her to her feet, wrinkling their noses. Maren can smell her friend too, the wind carrying the rust of old blood and piss towards them. Pastor Kurtsson presses a kerchief to his nose”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 303)

After it was decided to throw Kristen in the sea to prove she is a witch, they brought her in very bad shape, she was wearing a thin dress although the weather was cold. And she wasn't clean and her eyes were covered. They treated her in a disgraceful and inhuman way, they were still not sure if she was a witch or not and they treated her in this shameful way. How unjust men in power were.

*“Maren runs, forces her way forward. Kirsten vanishes beneath the water, which is white and churned by her impact. The cold from the waves slaps Maren's face. She is caught between hoping Kirsten will rise, and praying that she will sink as fast as did the runestones in her trouser pockets. But as Kirsten breaks the surface, her eyes wide and rolling, her breath coming fast and desperate from her chest, a keening sound shrill as the terns overhead, Maren knows she is glad Kirsten still lives, though it damns her”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 305)

*“A witch, as accused,” says the Lensmann, reaching up to clap Cornet on the shoulder. The commissioner is panting with the effort of pulling Commissioner Kirsten up. ‘A date shall be set’* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 305).

After dropping Kristen to the sea to prove she is a witch, Marin feels upset and sorrowful for her friend even though she has contradictory feelings wishing Kristen to sink and to survive at the same time. Ultimately, Kristen survived and it was proven she is a witch.

“Kirsten and Fru Olufsdatter are the first Norwegian women accused in living memory, and people are coming from as far as Tromsø, perhaps even Scotland” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 307)

As the author is saying in this part, Norwegian women have never been accused as witches, but after the storm and the death of their men, women were strong enough to move on and depend on themselves supporting each other, and that is a thing which men in power disliked, consequently, they accused the fine women like Kristen who has the biggest role in Vardo’s survival without men. For this unique event, everyone is coming to witness the trial.

*“Absalom places the first parchment down, picks up another. ‘And she confesses that she did, on Christmas Eve sixteen-seventeen, fly to the witches’ mountain of Ballvollen and there knot a cloth with five others, and set the storm that drowned forty men, her own husband among them”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 316)

*“parchment again. ‘And they did raise the storm so they might have property and dominion over their husbands’ land. ‘And she did steal Mads Petersson’ s herd which numbered fifty reindeer, and Fru Gunnsdatter was bewitched to row with her and eight others, where they did not lay nets but Fru Sørensdatter called the fish up with her breath. And she did wear trousers and so possessed the strength of a man, and sent terrors to Fru Knudsdatter and did blow upon Fru Jonsdatter and she fell sick with a wasting disease that swelled her belly”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 317).

Absalom explains to the audience how the storm took place and how women did the fishing by mentioning the confessions of Kristen, saying that, they intended to make the storm in order to take their husband's lands and have power over them. This quotation reflects the ill thinking of the men in power in the novel and how they are trying to fabricate such dreadful slander on women by all means.

### ***Violence Against Women by Women in Kristen's Life***

"I speak with the sailors who come to our harbour.' 'I see you do,' says Toril. 'It is most indecent.' Kirsten ignores her" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 35)

Kristen was telling some women about the news of their commissioner, as she heard it from the sailors passing through Vardo, and Toril didn't like this deed and told Kristen it was indecent. Although she was talking to the commissioner and even inviting him to her house. Violence is pretty obvious in her description as indecent.

**Betrayal.** Women betrayed Kristen in an unpleasant way as shown below.

### ***Betrayal of Women in Kristen's Life.***

*"You are accused.' 'Who accuses me?' 'I do, Kirsten Sørensdatter,' says Toril. 'And I,' says Sigfrid. 'And me,' says a tight voice behind them. Ursa turns to see Maren's mother, face wild with tears, lift a trembling hand and outstretch her finger. 'Witch'" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 281)*

*"Maren watches as the word ripples around the assembled women like a current. One by one they raise their fingers, hatred so bald and terrible on their faces it makes Maren's breath catch in her throat. All the kirke-women, Toril and Sigfrid and Lisbet and Magda, and even Edne, who came to warn her of Fru Olufsdatter's arrest, who sat beside her in the boat and rowed until their arms ached and grew strong. Maren tries to catch her eye, but Edne looks about the group, to Kirsten and to Absalom. His gaze falls upon her in return, and Edne, too, raises her hand, so fast*

*it is as if it has been pulled on a string. Kirsten stands alone in the centre of their arrowing hands, and the fight seems to flood from her sudden as blood” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 282)*

Betrayal is described in this part in its most horrific shape, the women of Vardo betrayed Kristen by accusing her of being a witch, and although she has the greatest credit to them, they would die of hunger if she didn't take them fishing. They were supposed to be friends and having each other's back in the shadow of the hard situation they've been through, but what happened was not expected at all and a big shock for Kristen.

*“Pastor Kurtsson has told me his next sermon will be to stay you, ' says Toril, narrowing her eyes at the top of Diinna' s head. 'The Lensmann will not think fishing proper.' 'He isn' t our Lensmann yet. And propriety doesn' t feed us,' says Kirsten. 'Only fish can do that. I' ll not be minding what a Scotsman thinks of it” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 34)*

Toril is showing her disloyalty to the women of Vardo after they went fishing, she is pleased that Pastor Kurtsson didn't like it and will talk about it in his sermon, although it's no shame to feed themselves and fish, Kristen didn't care for what Toril said and told her they need food to live, property will not feed them.

### **Obstacles Faced by Marin in the Novel**

Marin is a girl who is helping and supporting her friends and family, she lost her father, brother, and fiancé in the storm, but in the end, she was also accused of being a witch. In this part, the obstacles Marin faced will be discussed under patriarchy and women's independence.

#### ***Patriarchy***

Patriarchy is one of the important themes under the Socialist Feminism theory which is embodied in male dominance, oppression, injustice, and violence. Those issues

were faced by women in the novel. In this section, those issues will be discussed regarding Marin's life.

**Oppression in Marin's Life.** Marin had faced oppression in hard way as shown below.

*Marin as a Victim.*

*"Maren hesitates and suddenly Absalom's wide hands reach down, and are about her throat. Ursa jumps up, her chair overbalancing and crashing to the floor. Absalom, no!" \*You have bewitched my wife, have you not?' Spit flies from his mouth, and his eyes glitter wildly. Maren is making small crushed noises, like a dying bird. He lifts her from the chair and drags her away from Ursa. 'Tell me!' \*Absalom, she cannot speak!"* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 340).

Absalom is accusing Marin that she has bewitched his wife Ursa, he used physical violence with her to confess, but Marin couldn't speak to defend herself, she was almost dying because of his grip on her neck. A false charge as usual without evidence or proof. The pure shape of oppression.

"Do you confess?" says Absalom. 'That you have bewitched my wife, that you brought the storm with Kirsten Sørensdatter?' 'No,' gasps Maren. "No" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 341)

And here Absalom is adding another crime to Marin, which is bringing the storm to Vardo with Kristen besides bewitching Ursa, this part shows that the commissioner can charge any woman with any crime he likes unaided by evidence. This is how women live in the patriarchal societies. They are powerless to defend themselves.

*"Pastor Kurtsson watches from the narrow stoop of the kirke, preaches sermons of growing intensity on the merits of obeying the Kirke and its servants. But even as his fervour builds, Maren feels a change, a turning amongst the women"* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 42)

After the women of Vardo went fishing, Pastor Kurtsson judged them in a bad way that even Marin could feel it like a turning against women who were just trying to survive after the loss of their men and the huge pain they were feeling. And as Marin is one of those women, so it's against her too, that was only the beginning of male superiority and oppression of the women in the novel.

**Violence.** Marin also faced violence as it's explained below.

***Violence of Men in Power in Marin's Life.***

*"Maren's face is turning puce, and her feet are flailing for purchase on the floorboards, Ursa feels as though she moves through mud, slow and useless as she tears at his fingers. Absalom drops Maren roughly to the floor, knocks Ursa with a hard slap to her cheek that sets her head ringing"*

*"Answer me,' he says, finger pointed to Maren's heaving body. "Answer me. Before Maren can so much as catch her breath Absalom is upon her again. This time he drags her to the tub, and through watering eyes Ursa sees him bend Maren bodily over the water and plunge her in face first. Her legs kick out, and Ursa crawls to them, again tries to break his grip but he is holding grimly, silent now, watching the churning bubbles. 'You will kill her!'" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 340)*

Absalom treated Marin in a rough way, choking her, dropping her to the floor in a hard way, and putting her head into the water, all of that to let her say that she bewitched Ursa. Which would be a confession under torture and violence, that shows how men in power deal with accused women in order to confess things they didn't do. But Marin didn't say anything in the end.

**Betrayal.** Women did betray Marin in an ugly way as it's discussed below.



### ***Women's Betrayal in Marin's Life.***

*"Kirsten?" says Maren, her voice a whisper. 'Did Kirsten mention me?'"*

*"Mamma shakes her head. 'Fru Olufsdatter. Toril says she named you, and Edne. Just before she went to the stake. She says you went with Kirsten to the mountain'" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 335)*

The same situation that happened with Kristen is happening now with Marin, being accused by the women of Vardo as being a witch, the betrayal of women to others is so neat and outrageous, although they knew very well Marin is not a witch, they did accuse her. And the blind judgment of the men in power goes after this accusation and believes in it without any proof. Which reflects the absence of justice in Vardo.

### ***Marin's Disappointment in Her Family.***

*"Mamma watches her from bed with something like disapproval knotting her brow. She will not eat the fish, will not eat at all that night. She doesn't ask Maren what it was like on the boat, or tell her she is proud. She turns her back in bed, and feigns sleep" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 40)*

Mamma disliked the fact that Marin went fishing, she didn't even eat the fish Marin brought, instead of supporting her daughter, Mamma showed her disapproval. Her reaction is disappointing for Marin who is trying her best so their life can go back to normal.

### **Obstacles Ursa Faced in the Novel**

Ursa was living a quiet life with her family in Bergen before Absalom showed up in her life and proposed to her, she didn't know anything about him before marriage, she traveled with him to Vardo and found life so difficult there and the weather was pretty cold even in summer, then she started to discover that her husband is a witch hunter and her suffering stated. Despite the fact of her husband's job, she was helping the women of Vardo by giving warnings if they were at risk. In this section, the suffering of Ursa will be discussed under patriarchy and women's independence.

## ***Patriarchy***

Patriarchy is one of the important themes under the Socialist Feminism theory which is embodied in male dominance, oppression, injustice, and violence. Those issues were faced by women in the novel. In this section, those issues will be discussed regarding Ursa's life.

**Male Dominance.** Ursa faced dominance of her husband in the beginning of her marriage, as it's shown below.

### ***Financial Dominance in Ursa's Life.***

*"My sister gave me a little coin.' 'A husband should know of his wife's money,' he says, turning his dark eyes on her. 'Your father should have told you that.' He holds out his hand and after a moment's pause she reaches out to take it, but he flinches away. 'The money, wife'" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 92)*

After Ursa's marriage, she went to Vardo with her husband Absalom, they stopped on the way to buy some things, Ursa bought things without informing Absalom and the latest got upset because he didn't know that she had some money she got from her family. And he asked her to give him the rest of the money although it's not his money and they are newlywed. From this situation male dominance is clear enough to notice, Absalom is trying to have all control over Ursa, starting with financial control.

**Betrayal.** Ursa Faced Betrayal from her husband in a unique way, which is discussed in the coming section.

### ***Family Betrayal in Ursa's Life.***

*"I have come to arrest your friend, Urla. I know you are fond of her, and wished to spare you the embarrassment.' 'Maren?' The room spins as though it were she who is full of spirits. She is accused?" 'By the witch Olufsdatter herself. Her last confession'" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 338)*

Absalom is willing to arrest Marin regardless of his knowledge she is the best friend of his wife, For Ursa, this is a huge betrayal from her husband to take her best friend from her for no crime she did. Only a false accusation with no proof.

### **How Were Women Able to Be Independent in *The Mercies***

To answer the second question of the research the main themes showing women's independence are discussed below.

#### ***Women's Independence***

This part discusses Diinna's attitude amid the inequity she encountered with the men in power and how she was responsible and able to survive.

**Women's Union.** Women tried to support Diinna in different ways as shown below.

#### ***Female Support in Diinna's Life.***

*"Diinna, please. Come to kirke on the Sabbath. He should see your face, see you there." Diinna shrugs her off. 'I send Erik, for you and for your mother. That should be enough.' 'It is not for me.' Maren wants to shake her. 'It is for you, and if not for you, for Erik. It is in the commissioner's census that you do not go to kirke"* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 189)

Marin is trying to convince Diinna to go to Kirke to avoid the troubles, for her sake and her son's too, but Diinna refused to go, instead, she sent her son. Marin is supporting Diinna by all means and is doing her best to put her out of danger.

*"There were two Lapps in the gaol there.' Her jaw tightens further. 'They were wind-weavers.' 'I do not do that,' says Diinna. 'But the runes were mentioned, Diinna,' says Maren. 'The poppets too.' 'Fru Olufsdatter made those herself,' she says. 'I only told her which herbs to burn for remembrance.' 'And she is like to be in trouble too,' says Maren. 'But it is you we must concern ourselves with"* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 266).

Mare is again trying to warn Diinna from being arrested while Diinna is explaining she has nothing to do with witchcraft, Maren is concerned about Diinna which shows how they are supporting each other and intending to pass this hard situation without any losses.

*“But I wanted to tell you – Diinna is mentioned.’ ‘Mentioned?’ ‘My husband told the Lensmann of the runes, and he was not greatly pleased. The poppets too. I have a thought to tell Fru Olufsdatter, but I wanted to tell you about Diinna first.’ ‘You think it a bad thing?’ says Maren, though she knows it is. She is trying to grasp the edges of the situation, feel out what sort of trouble Ursa’s confidence holds. ‘My husband will not tell me more, but there was talk of witchcraft” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 262).*

Ursa is warning Maren about Diinna and telling her that she is mentioned by the men of power which means she will be accused as a witch soon, so Maren can tell Diinna in order to be careful about herself. In this part, the writer is showing how Ursa is supporting Diinna though she doesn’t know her well, just because she sees that it’s unfair to trial her for nonsense.

*“Mistress Cornet?’ Ursa gets straight to it. ‘I have just come from Vardøhus. My husband was invited to dine with Lensmann Cunningham. There was talk of you, at dinner.’ Diinna does not expect this, Maren can tell, though she hides her surprise well” (p. 266)*

*“You must warn Diinna. I thought she had time to make amends, I thought —’ ‘She’s gone.’ Maren says this low, so only Ursa can hear. ‘Gone?’” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 277)*

For the second time, Ursa is warning Diinna, especially after her visit to the Vardohus, she heard some stories about Lapps, and Diinna was mentioned, which means she is the next to be arrested, and also when her husband Absalom started to arrest the targeted women before Diinna, Ursa told Marin about it to give her a hint to save herself.

This is a great image of women's support, in spite of being the wife of the commissioner, Ursa is not satisfied with his deeds and trying to help Vardo's women.

**Survival.** Diinna tried to survive after the decision to arrest her, below is the discussion of her survival.

***Diinna's Escape to Save Her Life.***

*"gone?" "She is gone?" says Maren faintly, and if she had not whispered the news to Ursa a few minutes previously, Ursa would have believed her shock. 'And Erik? My brother's child, is he there?' The tears that come to Maren's eyes are as real as any, and Ursa can't stop herself reaching for her across the table. 'Absalom, please. This is a terrible shock for them'" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 279)*

Diinna decided to take her son and leave Vardo after the gossip about her being a witch, that was a bold decision she made to survive with her son and defend herself. Marin is telling Ursa that Diinna is gone when Absalom and his men broke into Marin's house to arrest Diinna. This part proves that women are able to be independent even in the hardest situations like Diinna who left her home with a very young child to live a better life without the need for anyone's help.

***Women's Independence***

This part discusses Kristen's attitude amid the inequity she encountered with the men in power and how she was responsible and brave.

**Women's Union.** Women tried to support Kristen in many ways as it's discussed below.

***Female Support in Kristen's Life.***

*"I need to speak with him." Maren voices the thought before it is fully come. 'Who?' says Ursa, and there is a challenge in her voice, as though daring Maren to say. 'Your husband,' Maren pushes on, the idea taking*

*hold. 'I need to tell him he is wrong.' She rises to her feet and Ursa hurries to her, places her hand on her shoulder to force her back down. Maren lets her. 'That would be a mistake.' 'This is all a mistake.' Maren clenches her fists to stop her fingers shaking. 'It's Kirsten, Ursa.' Ursa turns away, back to the hearth. 'You must not draw attention to yourself.' Her hands are white birds, fluttering about the pot. 'A trap is set, and I will not have you be the next to walk into it' (Hargrave, 2020, P. 284)*

After the arrest of Kristen, Marin was willing to talk to Absalom and tell him that he did a mistake by arresting Kristen and that she is no witch, but Ursa stopped her for the reason that she knew it would be wrong thing to do, drawing attention to Marin and she might be arrested too, although Marin is aware of the risk and there was no hope that Absalom would listen to her, she tried her best to help her friend Kristen.

“She dresses in her yellow again. This time she wants to be seen, wants Kirsten to notice her and know she isn't to go to death without a friend” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 322)

Ursa attended the trial of Kristen, despite it was so hard for her to witness such a thing but, she decided to go and wear her yellow dress so Kristen could see her, and give her moral support in the last minutes of her life.

*“You should be careful, Kirsten,” says Maren. ‘What if it had not been me at the door? What if it had been Toril, or Pastor Kurtsson?’ ‘They most certainly would have fainted,’ says Kirsten breezily. ‘It’s no matter, Maren’ (Hargrave, 2020, p. 102)*

Kristen was wearing trousers which is an unfavorable thing for a woman to do in Vardo, and Marin was trying to warn Kristen from Toril, one of the women who is known as a wicked one. And Pastor Kurtsson who is a man of religion in Vardo. This part shows friend's concern and support, also how a female could turn against another one and how a man of religion could hurt a woman for just wearing trousers.

*“Mamma as they walk the other way. ‘That Kirsten Sørensdatter ought to be careful. She thinks herself our Lensmann, I can see that arrogance in*

*her.’ ‘She has been, of sorts,’ says Maren, as they pass the second boat shed. ‘Kirsten kept us alive. She is a better Lensmann than the one soon to sit at Vardøhus’ (Hargrave, 2020, p. 97).*

Mamma is telling Marin that Kristen should be careful because she is acting in a very strong way like she is the Lensman trying to lead Vardo and telling the women what to do, and Mamma starts to see arrogance in her. But Marine nicely defended Kristen by saying that she is better than the Lensman and that she helped them to survive by pushing them to bring food and go back to their normal life.

*“I need to be sure there is nothing here. Nothing for them to find.’ Ursa’s eyebrows rise. ‘You think it possible?’ ‘I know it is impossible that Kirsten is a witch,’ says Maren. She remembers the runestones in Diinna’s room, the casting bones and the needle glinting against Toril’s lace. ‘But they may find things they do not understand, things they can use against her.’ ‘All right,’ says Ursa, nodding slowly. ‘We must be quick.’ Maren pushes inside. Ursa follows cautiously” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 289)*

Even after Kristen is arrested, Marin is still hoping that she can help her regardless that she knows Kristen will never come back, she is searching in her house for any suspicious thing men of the commissioner could find and consider it an evidence of sorcery, Ursa is assisting as well.

**Strength.** The writer shows Kristen as a strong woman, which is discussed in the coming section.

### ***Liberty in Kristen’s Life.***

*“The women sit in their usual pews, hollows left between where husbands and sons sat, but Kirsten orders them forwards. All but Diinna obey, dumb as a herd. They take up three of the kirke’s seven rows. ‘There have been wrecks before,’ says Kirsten. ‘We have survived when men are lost’ (Hargrave, 2020, p. 8).*

Women of Vardo lived great sorrow after they lost their men in the storm, including Kristen who lost her husband, but in spite of her loss, she is trying to give the women moral support and push them to move on and continue their lives like before, to do the things they used to do and leave sadness behind. This support is very important for them because they enclosed themselves and neglected their lives.

*“It will not change with more waiting,’ Kirsten begins, as though picking up a conversation. Her brow is pulled down over her small blue eyes. ‘Our neighbours have been kind but we all know kindness has its time. We must start carrying ourselves.’ She straightens: something clicks. ‘The ice is gone, we have the midnight sun, and there are four boats fit for sea. It is time to fish. We need twenty women, perhaps sixteen. I am one”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 32)

In this part, the author shows how Kristen is a brave woman, she is encouraging the women to move on in their lives after their loss and to do so they are in need of food, which means they should go fishing, and Kristen is telling them to do so, depending on themselves, they can go fishing and feed their families as well as themselves.

*“You have come to the commissioner’ s house, Kirsten. The commissioner’ s house, in trousers!’ ‘They are my finest trousers,’ says Kirsten, her voice mock-affronted. ‘And yet you slaughter in them?’ says Ursa, playing along. Maren’ s face is still wretched, and Ursa tries to soothe her. ‘I will not tell my husband, Maren”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 166)

Wearing trousers in Vardo is for men only, but after the death of the men, Kristen wore her husband’s trousers for slaughter and went to the commissioner’s house in trousers, without being afraid that she might be seen by anyone and tell Absalom, or he might see her by himself or even his wife could mention it to him, and Kristen could be in a trouble, on the contrary, she was very confident and didn’t care for what anyone would say about her in trousers neither what circumstances could show up.



“If Kirsten were a man Maren thinks she would be more than an unofficial leader of their village, rather a minister or a man of the law, perhaps even a commissioner” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 103)

Marin is thinking about Kristen and that she is strong enough to lead Vardo, and if she was a man, she could be their commissioner, that shows how Kristen is a fine woman who proved herself when the storm took place and she was able to move on and encouraged the other women to do the same, she was good enough to be a leader.

*“Kirsten sits on the edge of the grave, and before Maren understands what she is doing, she has dropped down so only her head and shoulders emerge, arms outstretched. The men stare wordlessly at one another, and so Kirsten takes her husband herself, and disappears from view as she lowers him down. The next they see of her, she is pulling herself up, her stockinged leg flashing as she climbs out of the grave”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 24)

Kristen remarkably shows her strength physically and morally when she buries her husband by herself despite the presence of some men to bury the others, but she prefers to do it by herself without asking for help from anyone.

### ***Women’s Independence***

This part discusses Marin’s attitude amid the inequity she encountered with the men in power and how she was responsible and able to survive.

**Women’s Union.** Women supported Marin in order to survive as it’s shown below.

### ***Female Support in Marin’s Life.***

*“Your position is not good, Maren. Even I can see that. You should leave, perhaps, like Diinna.’ Maren looks at her sharply. ‘Leave?’ ‘You could go to Bergen, to my household. My father could keep you safe”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 284)

Ursa is trying to protect Marin from Absalom by telling her to travel to her father's house to be safe because Ursa knows her husband wants to arrest Marin for false charges, friends support is clear in this quotation although that will not be good for Absalom, and if he knows what Ursa is doing he will punish her in a hard way, but she prefers to help her friend Marin.

*"Ursa drops the rolling pin and it thumps and spins away. Ursa can't see Absalom but for his back. It is unmoving. 'Of me, too.'" She loosens her grip and Maren crawls forward, moves to the other side of the tub. Is he? Yes "Oh, God. Oh, God. I did not mean to kill him. It sounds unconvincing even to herself, though she knows she did not, not really. Only meant to stop him. She had to stop him. What will I do?" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 342)*

Ursa supported Marin in a blind way that she even killed her husband when she was trying to stop him from assaulting Marin, although she didn't mean to kill him, she was just trying to move him away from Marin because he almost killed her. It's not easy to do such a thing, especially she knew Absalom is a hard man she took the risk and hit him to save Marin.

*"No," says her mother. "Erik is dead. And your Pappa. And... she breaks off, hand rising to her head. And you will be too.' Maren's breath catches. You are drunk.' 'It is true, my girl. A fresh bout of sobs shakes her. 'Your name it has been mentioned" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 334)*

Mamma is telling Marin that her name was mentioned and she will be arrested soon, although her mother was unkind to her and didn't like her to go fishing, she is warning her about what will come after her, she might die like her father and brother. In order to save her before it's too late, Mamma is standing with Marin by letting her know that she is in danger.

"Nobody",' says Ursa, at last understanding. "When they asked her for more names, that is how she answered. She wouldn't take another down with her. She is a good woman, and she loves you" (Hargrave, 2020, p. 320)

Ursa is telling Marin that Kristen didn't mention any name including hers when they asked her in the trial about other names of witches she knows about, Kristen was a good woman and protected Marin even when she was dying.

**Survival.** Marin survives in the end, showing that she is a strong woman, as explained below.

***Marin Protects Her Life.***

“She will not let herself be caught. She had decided this the moment her mother told her she was mentioned. She will not let herself burn, live long enough to smell her own body blazing” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 347)

Marin was strong enough to decide to leave after her name was mentioned as being a witch and she would be arrested and tried soon, it was a bold decision to make, leaving her own place, her mother, and her best friend Ursa, but there was no other way to save her life, she was strong and independent when she faced the injustice upon her by leaving.

*“Maren's expression is so sad Ursa's own chest aches. 'I am going to go away, Ursa. Go away?' 'Like Diinna. And they will find his body and think I did it' They will kill you' I am mentioned Ursa feels a bloom of pain in her chest. She had forgotten the reason for her husband's visit to the boathouse”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 343)

Marin's toughness and independence are shown in this part of the novel, after Ursa killed Absalom, Marin tries to tell Ursa to leave and save herself from this crime because they will accuse Marin of killing him not Ursa, in spite of Marin's decision of leaving, it was still not guaranteed that she could make it before Absalom's men get to her, but she took it upon herself and was ready to sacrifice her life for Ursa's sake.

***Marin's Strength and Cooperation.***

“Maren's hand goes up with ten others” (Hargrave, 2020, p.33)

Kristen was asking Vardo women, who is able to go fishing with her after the storm, and Marin raised her hand nevertheless, it was a new and risky thing for them as women to go and fish in the sea, but she was brave enough to volunteer.

“The clouds sweep aside and though she can’t feel its warmth, the sun is starting to redden Maren’s nose. She feels tired and happy, and does not think of the whale at all” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 38)

Marin was capable of going fishing with the other women, now she depends on herself to get food for her family and herself as well to survive and she was thrilled however, she was feeling tired. And she even forgot about the whale that she saw in the storm which killed the men, she was afraid of it, but at that moment on the boat, she was pleased.

“She(maren) starts to imagine that Vardø could go on for ever this way: a place without men, and still surviving” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 22)

What the author is showing here is that women were able to live without men and they were independent and strong enough to survive. Marin is imagining the place without men forever, which means they succeeded in living on their own.

### ***Women’s Independence***

This part discusses Ursa’s attitude amid the inequity she encountered with the men in power and how she was responsible and able to survive.

**Women’s Union.** Ursa got support from her friend as shown below.

### ***Female Support in Ursa’s Life.***

“Do you trust me?” says Maren into the unsteady silence. Ursa looks up at her, at the hard angles of her face. ‘Yes.’ ‘Go back to bed. Ursa draws away.’ ‘Go back to bed, Maren repeats” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 343)

Marin has a plan to protect Ursa from the crime she did and asks her to trust her and go home.

*“I want you to go to bed, and to report your husband missing in the morning. I want you to say you saw nothing, heard nothing. Even if it takes them days to find him. And then I want you to go back to Bergen, to your father. That ship in the harbour, it is the one that brought you. It can take you back”* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 344)

Marin tries to calm Ursa down after she killed Absalom and tells her to go to bed and pretend like nothing happened, also to report he is missing to not be suspected. And after that, she can go back to her home and family in the same ship that she came by to Vardo. At this moment, Marin’s support was very important for the reason that Ursa was traumatized and she might have reported by herself that she killed her husband, but Marin was able to control the situation and sent Ursa to her house.

**Survival.** Ursa was able to survive after the difficulties that she had with her husband, it is explained below.

***Ursa’s Strength Against the Injustice of Her Husband.***

*“ Is he? Yes "Oh, God. Oh, God. I did not mean to kill him. It sounds unconvincing even to herself, though she knows she did not, not really. Only meant to stop him. She had to stop him. What will I do?"* (Hargrave, 2020. p. 342)

In this part, Ursa took the biggest risk in her life and hit Absalom on his head when she was trying to defend her friend, Marin, this hit led to his death, although she was shocked and said she didn’t mean to kill him, but his death set her and her best friend free, and she is able to go back to her father’s house and live in peace.

## **How *The Mercies* Novel Shows the Radical Feminism Perspective Along With Socialist Feminism**

As shown in the analysis above according to Socialist Feminism, women were facing patriarchal issues and were trying to get their independence and prove themselves as strong individuals who could survive without the need of men. Radical Feminism seeks the same goals, to put an end to the patriarchal behaviors against women, get their social rights, and help them to be independent. In order to show the connection between Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism, the quotations below will be discussed accordingly.

### ***Injustice and Oppression under the Patriarchal Norms in Diinna's Life.***

*“We will have a Lensmann there, Hans Kønning. He is under direct orders from King Christian, and will be making great changes, Pastor Kurtsson says, with new strictures on kirke-going.’ Toril looks directly at Diinna. ‘And he is looking to settle the Lapps and bring them to God” ( Hargrave, 2020, P. 34)*

In the novel Lapps are portrayed as magicians who are doing evil things to hurt people and the authorities are looking for them to trial under the name of religion, and as Diinna is a Lapp she is under the threat of death for nothing, just because she is a Lapp. Here is the oppression and injustice shown in Diinna's condition, to face death just for her origin and the common notion about it. This shows how women suffer from patriarchal norms which Radical Feminism is against.

### ***Violence Against Women by Women in Diinna's Life.***

*“If what Edne says is true, it was sent.’ ‘Sent?’ says Sigfrid, and Maren sees Kirsten turn a thankful eye upon her, thinking she has found an ally. ‘Such a thing is possible?’ A sigh comes from the back of the kirke, and the whole room turns towards Diinna, but she tilts her head back, eyes closed, the brown skin of her throat gleaming gold in the candlelight. ‘The Devil works darkly,’ says Toril, and her daughter presses her face beneath her shoulder, cries out in fear. Maren wonders what terrors Toril has*

*woven into her two surviving children these past three days. 'He has power set above all but God's. He could send such a thing. Or it could be called'* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 9).

The women of Vardo accusing Diinna of sending the storm by witchcraft, they were guessing if the storm was sent by evil work and looking at Diinna, in a suspicious way, although they knew she hadn't done anything like that before and she is not dealing with witchcraft. This behavior of women came from their fear of authorities and their injustice, they might be accused as witches, so they tried to find some victims to be charged and save their lives. That's also what Radical Feminism is against.

### ***Oppression of Men in Power in Kristen's Life.***

"They cannot hurt them," says Ursa. "Not for nothing." "You know they can," says Maren" (p. 285)

Talking about Kristen and Fru Olufsdatter after they have been arrested for the crime of sorcery. Ursa is saying that with no evidence no one can hurt them, but Marin is assuring that they can hurt them even if they are innocent. This is a very clear sentence to prove the dominance and injustice of the men in power against women. This part shows how Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism are connected to fight the patriarchal systems.

### ***Violence Against Women by Women in Kristen's Life***

"I speak with the sailors who come to our harbour." "I see you do," says Toril. "It is most indecent." Kirsten ignores her" (Hargrave, 2020, P. 35)

Kristen was telling some women about the news of their commissioner, as she heard it from the sailors passing through Vardo, and Toril didn't like this deed and told Kristen it was indecent. Although she was talking to the commissioner and even inviting him to her house. Violence is pretty obvious in her description as indecent. This part also shows the effect of patriarchal authorities that makes women go against each other to save their lives.

### ***Marin as a Victim in the Patriarchal Society***

*“Maren hesitates and suddenly Absalom's wide hands reach down, and are about her throat. Ursa jumps up, her chair overbalancing and crashing to the floor. Absalom, no!” \*You have bewitched my wife, have you not?’ Spit flies from his mouth, and his eyes glitter wildly. Maren is making small crushed noises, like a dying bird. He lifts her from the chair and drags her away from Ursa. ‘Tell me!’ \*Absalom, she cannot speak!”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 340).

Absalom is accusing Marin that she has bewitched his wife Ursa, he used physical violence with her to confess, but Marin couldn’t speak to defend herself, she was almost dying because of his grip on her neck. A false charge as usual without evidence or proof. The pure shape of oppression. One goal of Radical Feminism is the right of women to defend themselves, which Marin could not do because of men’s abuse and oppression.

### ***Women's Betrayal in Marin’s Life.***

*“Kirsten?’ says Maren, her voice a whisper. ‘Did Kirsten mention me?’”*

*“Mamma shakes her head. ‘Fru Olufsdatter. Toril says she named you, and Edne. Just before she went to the stake. She says you went with Kirsten to the mountain”* (Hargrave, 2020, p. 335)

The same situation that happened with Kristen is happening now with Marin, being accused by the women of Vardo as being a witch, the betrayal of women to others is so neat and outrageous, although they knew very well Marin is not a witch, they did accuse her. And the blind judgment of the men in power goes after this accusation and believes in it without any proof. Which reflects the absence of justice in Vardo. The same situation happened with Marin, women turned against her to show they are good women looking for Justice to stay away from false accusations.



### ***Financial Dominance in Ursa's Life.***

*“My sister gave me a little coin.’ ‘A husband should know of his wife’s money,’ he says, turning his dark eyes on her. ‘Your father should have told you that.’ He holds out his hand and after a moment’s pause she reaches out to take it, but he flinches away. ‘The money, wife” (Hargrave, 2020, p. 92)*

After Ursa's marriage, she went to Vardo with her husband Absalom, they stopped on the way to buy some things, Ursa bought things without informing Absalom and the latest got upset because he didn't know that she had some money she got from her family. And he asked her to give him the rest of the money although it's not his money and they are newlywed. From this situation male dominance is clear enough to notice, Absalom is trying to have all control over Ursa, starting with financial control. The financial independence was one of the goals of Radical Feminism, and it is missing in Ursa's life.

### ***Diinna's Escape to Save Her Life.***

*“gone?’ ‘She is gone?’ says Maren faintly, and if she had not whispered the news to Ursa a few minutes previously, Ursa would have believed her shock. ‘And Erik? My brother’s child, is he there?’ The tears that come to Maren’s eyes are as real as any, and Ursa can’t stop herself reaching for her across the table. ‘Absalom, please. This is a terrible shock for them” (Hargrave, 2020, P. 279)*

Diinna decided to take her son and leave Vardo after the gossip about her being a witch, that was a bold decision she made to survive with her son and defend herself. Marin is telling Ursa that Diinna is gone when Absalom and his men broke into Marin's house to arrest Diinna. This part proves that women are able to be independent even in the hardest situations like Diinna who left her home with a very young child to live a better life without the need for anyone's help, which shows the Radical Feminism perspective.

***Liberty in Kristen's Life.***

*"It will not change with more waiting,' Kirsten begins, as though picking up a conversation. Her brow is pulled down over her small blue eyes. 'Our neighbours have been kind but we all know kindness has its time. We must start carrying ourselves.' She straightens: something clicks. 'The ice is gone, we have the midnight sun, and there are four boats fit for sea. It is time to fish. We need twenty women, perhaps sixteen. I am one'"*  
(Hargrave, 2020, p. 32)

In this part, the author shows how Kristen is a brave woman, she is encouraging the women to move on in their lives after their loss and to do so they are in need of food, which means they should go fishing, and Kristen is telling them to do so, depending on themselves, they can go fishing and feed their families as well as themselves. As Radical Feminism is calling for the independence of women, they are trying to be independent and even do the things that men were supposed to do.

***Marin Protects Her Life.***

*"She will not let herself be caught. She had decided this the moment her mother told her she was mentioned. She will not let herself burn, live long enough to smell her own body blazing"* (Hargrave, 2020, P. 347)

Marin was strong enough to decide to leave after her name was mentioned as being a witch and she would be arrested and tried soon, it was a bold decision to make, leaving her own place, her mother, and her best friend Ursa, but there was no other way to save her life, she was strong and independent when she faced the injustice upon her by leaving. Marin's behavior in this part shows the Radical Feminism perspective,

***Ursa's Strength Against the Injustice of Her Husband.***

*" Is he? Yes "Oh, God. Oh, God. I did not mean to kill him. It sounds unconvincing even to herself, though she knows she did not, not really. Only meant to stop him. She had to stop him. What will I do?"* (Hargrave, 2020. p. 342)

In this part, Ursa took the biggest risk in her life and hit Absalom on his head when she was trying to defend her friend, Marin, this hit led to his death, although she was shocked and said she didn't mean to kill him, but his death set her and her best friend free, and she is able to go back to her father's house and live in peace. Defending their rights is one goal of Radical Feminism for women, and it is what Ursa did.

### **Summary**

This chapter explained women's suffering in the patriarchal community in *The Mercies* novel. As well as how those women proved themselves as independent and able to succeed even in the most difficult situations as portrayed in the novel, and how Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism share the same perspectives. The main characters who were under discussion in this chapter are Marin, Ursa, Krestin, and Diinna. By analyzing the chosen characters from the novel the three questions of the research were answered.

## CHAPTER V

### Discussion

#### Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the research questions were discussed, the questions were (1-How was the suffering of women portrayed in the novel *The Mercies*? 2-How were women able to be independent in the hardest situations in *The Mercies* novel? 3-How *The Mercies* Novel Shows the Radical Feminism Perspective Along With Socialist Feminism?) The analysis of the selected novel in chapter four provided the reasons behind the suffering of women in the patriarchal society as well as their independence. To answer the research questions, the following themes were chosen (injustice and oppression, violence, women's union, and survival) and discussed below to describe the struggles women faced in the chosen data. The summary of this chapter is written in the end.

#### Factors Behind Women's Suffering in the Novel Under Patriarchy

The first question of this research was (1-How was the suffering of women portrayed in the novel *The Mercies*?) To answer this question, the researcher analyzed the chosen characters from the novel to show their suffering. In the coming section, the main reasons for women's suffering will be discussed under the themes of injustice and oppression, and violence.

#### *Injustice and Oppression*

As shown in chapter four, women faced different types of obstacles in the patriarchal community like injustice and oppression. The chosen characters from the novel had been through huge injustice and oppression in multiple shapes, first, when the men died in the storm women took the lead in their place and went fishing, as there was no food but fish. They were judged in a bad way by the men in power, although women did a normal thing trying to survive and feed their families. And the second time when they were accused of being witches and had a trial based on this false accusation, they

were treated in a very inhumane way and were burned to death without any evidence to prove them guilty. Those actions of men showed that they were trying to hinder women from living a normal life without their men. This reflects the thoughts of patriarchal thinking, that women can't live such a life, they should be always under the rule and mercy of men. This thinking led the male characters in the novel to act in a very cruel way and hurt women in various ways even killing them just to prove that they have control over women and they can do anything they like without any judgment from females. Instead, they have to follow them and implement whatever they say, even if it's against women.

### ***Violence***

The other form of patriarchy is violence, in the novel women faced different types of violence like physical, verbal, and moral violence. As portrayed in chapter four, women were being tortured to confess their crimes although everyone knew they were innocent, they were left hungry and dirty and with thin clothes in a very cold weather in jail, beating them to force them to confess things they didn't do, to prove for themselves and for people that they are working and cleaning Vardo from witches who brought the storm and may do other harmful things. Women even encountered violence by other women because of their fear of men in power, they started to accuse their own friends and neighbors of sorcery, not to mention the bad words they said about those innocent women, some of them even their own families turned against them, also for the same reason. In the end, the researcher found out that injustice, oppression, and violence existed in the past in multiple shapes. This result is answering the first question of the research.

### **Women's Strength and Courage as Shown Under Women's Independence**

To answer the second question in this research (How were women able to be independent in the hardest situations in *The Mercies* novel? The researcher did the analysis for the chosen female characters of the novel in order to find the answer. The coming section discusses two themes to show women's independence, which are women's union, and survival.

### ***Women's Union***

Women in the novel went through horrible situations, the first one was the storm and the death of their men, the second was moving on and trying to control the place and get food without men to help, and the third one was when they had a new commissioner and he started to arrest the finest women under the charge of sorcery. Through all these stages women were able to have each other's back, although some of them did the opposite, the majority were very cooperative. As mentioned in chapter four, they went fishing together, helped each other to overcome their men's death, warned each other from the danger of being accused from the new commissioner and even they tried to defend each other after being arrested despite the fact that they knew it was useless. All of these situations showed the strong image of women who support each other in the most difficult circumstances trying to move on and have control on the chaotic state that took place in Vardo. Although men in power didn't let them live in peace by themselves, the females did their best till the end.

### ***Survival***

In *The Mercies* novel, women were able to survive and proved that they were independent by leading their place after the death of their men, also bringing food by their own from the sea, which is not easy job for women, but they did it anyway. Besides, some of them could save their lives and escaped after being accused as witches, although the commissioner's men could have found them. They took the risk and left Vardo. Even the ones who were trialed, they remained steadfast till they died. The female characters in the novel proved that women can always survive regardless of the situation or the place, they are responsible enough for their lives and try their best to protect themselves from the ugliness of the patriarchal community, challenging whatever they may face from men and willing to go through it and move on. Those women set a good example to others and can help other women who have difficulties of any kind to pass it and survive.

In conclusion, the researcher concluded that women were able to be independent in the hardest situations by surviving, defending their rights, and facing injustice with great success, which answers the second question.

### **The Similarity Between Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism Perspectives.**

In order to answer the research's third question, which was (How *The Mercies* Novel Shows the Radical Feminism Perspective Along With Socialist Feminism?) the researcher analyzed the chosen parts from the novel related to the four chosen characters under the same themes mentioned earlier in this research to find the required answer. After analyzing the data, the researcher found that Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism share the same goals which are to stop the patriarchal behaviors against women, protect women from the oppression they face in different shapes, and help them to be independent in various spheres of life, this result is answering the third question.

### **Summary**

This chapter discussed the hardships women went through in the patriarchal societies in *The Mercies* novel which talked about a story that took place in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, by explaining the findings of the analysis of the main themes, the researcher found that in the novel women suffered from patriarchal issues in multiple shapes, which answering the first question. It also, discussed how women were independent and able to survive and move on through the most difficult conditions in the chosen characters of the novel. After being analyzed under the main themes, this answers the second question. Also, how Radical Feminism and Socialist Feminism share the same perspectives and goals to help women get a better life, which answers the third question.

## CHAPTER VI

### Conclusion and Recommendation

#### Introduction

To conclude the current research, this chapter briefed the steps researchers did in order to complete the research, and what was the result of it, as well as the suggestions for future research.

#### Conclusion

Women were suffering from patriarchal communities through all ages, they were hindered from having multiple types of jobs, having unequal salaries as well. Not to mention that they were denied to be in the political sphere and not able to vote. Also, their chances to be educated were limited, especially in the Universities where their presence was not welcomed. And many other issues were mentioned in this research. In order to get their rights, women came up with the feminist movement which was divided into three phases, each of which did a noticeable change in women's conditions in the patriarchal societies. This research was concerned with those issues women faced in the past through choosing *The Mercies* novel which talks about a historical event that took place in the 17<sup>th</sup> century shedding light on women's struggles with the male characters in the novel who were following patriarchal standards. The aim of the current study was to answer the research questions (1-How was the suffering of women portrayed in the novel *The Mercies*? 2-How were women able to be independent in the hardest situations in *The Mercies* novel? 3- How *The Mercies* Novel Shows the Radical Feminism Perspective Along With Socialist Feminism?) The chosen characters of the novel embodied women's struggles and were discussed in detail explaining how women in the novel went through different types of struggles like losing their own fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers in a storm. Also, being accused as witches and trialed for this false accusation. And how they were strong enough to face all these circumstances successfully. On the other hand, it showed how Socialist Feminism and Radical feminism have the same perspectives which are calling for getting women's rights and



helping them to be independent. The approach used for analyzing the chosen data of the study was qualitative content analysis and by using the thematic analysis approach by Arundhati Roy. Braun and Clarke's (2006) which was done by following six stages (familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report). After reading the data several times, the researcher conducted the main themes to be discussed. The analysis was under patriarchy and women's independence and the main themes (injustice and oppression, violence, women's union, and survival). This analysis resulted in finding out the factors behind the suffering of women and how they faced difficulties and survived proving that they can live independently and successfully, and in the end, the researcher answered the research questions.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study explained women's issues during the 17<sup>th</sup> century in *The Mercies* novel. Future researchers can look for other novels discussing women's issues in the present time, also they can expand their data by making interviews with women or have a questionnaire or survey to have more cases and get better results. The other recommendation is to make a comparative study to compare women's past and present conditions. On the other hand, this research was done by using the Socialist Feminism theory which was the best one for it, researchers can study *The Mercies* novel under other theories such as Liberal Feminism, Radical Feminism, Marxist Feminism, etc. In order to have different results.

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