



Death as Resistance in Marianne Katoppo's *Raumanen* (1977)

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Abstrak

Bunuh diri seringkali dipandang sebagai tindakan dengan makna yang negatif. Namun, bunuh diri dalam konteks tertentu juga dapat mengisyaratkan makna lain yang jauh lebih dalam. Misalnya saja, tindakan bunuh diri yang tercermin dalam ketokohan di beberapa novel Indonesia modern, salah satunya novel *Raumanen* karya Marianne Katoppo (1977). Oleh karena itu, artikel ini bertujuan untuk memperluas pembacaan pada tindakan bunuh diri yang terjadi dalam novel tersebut. Berawal dari trope tentang perempuan yang bunuh diri dalam karya fiksi tragis yang sudah baku sejak lama, tindakan tersebut sering kali dibaca sebagai kekalahan dan kegilaan. Namun melalui lensa hasil sintesis dari gagasan gynokritisme Elaine Showalter dan konsep of *écriture féminine* dari Hélène Cixous, dapat dipahami cara perempuan mengklaim kembali tubuhnya melalui tulisan. Dalam hal ini, penulis berargumen bahwa dengan menarasikan ceritanya sendiri, *Raumanen* sebagai narator dalam cerita mengambil alih kendali atas tubuh dan suaranya. Alhasil, pembacaan ini akan memprovokasi sebuah pembacaan kritis atas bentuk dan makna bunuh diri dalam karya sastra, khususnya yang dilakukan oleh perempuan.

Kata Kunci: *écriture féminine*, gynocriticism, sastra feminis, representasi bunuh diri.

Abstract

Suicide is often viewed as an act with negative connotations. However, in certain contexts, suicide can also convey a much deeper meaning. For example, acts of suicide are reflected in the characters of several modern Indonesian novels, one of which is Marianne Katoppo's *Raumanen* (1977). Therefore, this article aims to expand the interpretation of the act of suicide depicted in the novel. Starting from the long-established trope of women committing suicide in tragic fiction, such acts are often interpreted as defeat and madness. However, through a lens synthesizing Elaine Showalter's concept of gynocriticism and Hélène Cixous's concept of *écriture féminine*, we can understand how women reclaim their bodies through writing. In this context, the author argues that by narrating her own story, *Raumanen*—as the narrator—takes control of her body and voice. Consequently, this interpretation will provoke a critical examination of the forms and meanings of suicide in literary works, particularly those committed by women.

Keywords: *écriture féminine*, gynocriticism, feminist literature, representations of suicide.

1. Introduction

Death is always tragic and gloomy. However, Edgar Allan Poe famously once wrote that “the death of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world” (1901, 27). Such masculine obsession was an established trope in the history of fiction. From Shakespearean drama to 19th-century fiction, many narratives use female suicide as a plot device to convey a certain meaning or an objectification of women by the *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975). Conversely, in Indonesian literature, the notion of female suicide is hard to come by. Though many works of writing use female death, most of them use symbolic suicide, but not explicitly. This paper argues that Marianne Katoppo’s *Raumanen* (1977) departs from this pattern by depicting female suicide explicitly and by reframing it as an act of agency rather than mere objectification.

Marianne Katoppo is an author and theologian from North Sulawesi. Her first novel, *Raumanen*, won the Jakarta Art Council's best novel award in 1975 and was published two years later. As an author, she has written several short stories for monthly magazines and daily newspapers, and has also published novels, including *Dunia Tak Bermusim* (1974), *Anggrek Tak Pernah Berdusta* (1977), *Terbangnya Punai* (1978), and *Rumah di Atas Jembatan* (1981). While her prolific authorship has established her name in the Indonesian literary scene, her theological writing has also influenced many Christians. Her book, *Compassionate and Free* (1979), is considered an influential work of Asian feminist theology (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008).

In *Raumanen*, her idea about morality interplays with culture and tradition. Katoppo set the story in Jakarta, a metropolitan city where people from different parts of Indonesia gathered. Since the novel also took place during the early New Order Regime, Indonesia experienced a surge in Western cultural influence. The representation of women oftentimes follows the state narrative to domesticate women’s bodies (Udasromo & Saktiningrum, 2022). Katoppo keeps the characters' ethnic backgrounds, including the stereotypes that reveal underlying tensions and cultural stereotypes (Utami, 2024). By doing this, *Raumanen* feels authentic while also questioning social boundaries. However, she challenged the boundaries of how women are represented in fiction through the titular protagonist.

Oftentimes, the female protagonist is depicted as innocent, gentle, refined in feeling, and able to resist temptation. This approach to writing about women is considered rare in most Indonesian fiction of that time. In *Raumanen*, the protagonist is depicted as an intellectually and politically engaged student. This characterization not only adds tragic value to her demise but also proves how she can be a threat to a male-dominated society. Even though she is a

tragic heroine, Katoppo cleverly avoids the patriarchal trope of women's demise by deliberately adopting a semi-autobiographical form. By doing this, Raumanen's suicide is reframed not as an absence of agency but as an act of reclaiming the self that is robbed by the constraints and social expectations.

Despite the novel having several accolades, it is unfortunate that scholarly research is still limited, let alone about feminist readings of women's suicide. Some recent studies on the novel include cultural conflict (Fauzan & Darpito, 2023) and a comparison of marriage traditions with Abdul Muis' *Salah Asuhan* (Azzahra, 2023). Those studies are only barely scratching the surface. Since the novel brought up the topic of women's suicide, which is a sensitive topic in Indonesia, it is clear that the novel invites discussion of deeper topics such as theology, agency, or identity. However, there are some recent articles that discuss the novel from a feminist point of view, such as a comparison between *Raumanen* and Djenar Maesa Ayu's *Nayla* (Nurul Khairani et al., 2022) and a discussion of women's presentation on the novel's cover (Karim & Haryanti, 2021). All of which articles clearly don't venture into the deep and intricate storytelling that Katoppo has written. Therefore, I would like to bring a little deeper discussion that strikes through the core of the story, which is the suicide itself. This topic seems a little bit contradictory since Katoppo herself was a prominent theologian who incorporated suicide as the resolution for her main character.

In terms of how a woman author writes about women in Indonesia, the consensus is largely the same. Women are often portrayed as rebellious and determined (Hatley, 1999; Priyatna, 2018; Sukowati, 2024; Wulandar & Siscawati, 2025). This kind of writing is a critique and a challenge to the dominant narrative of women during the New Order regime, which used the state of Ibuism to control women's bodies (Udasromo & Saktiningrum, 2022). This woman's resistance is encapsulated by Priyatna's concept of *kebaya feminism* (Priyatna, 2023), which is deeply rooted in Indonesia's vast and varied culture.

The discourse about women's suicide is not a rare sight, and it is evolving over time. The discussions have evolved from a sociological foundation (Durkheim, 2002), which defined suicide or voluntary death as a social fact derived from social structure instead of individual motives. He, then, identified specific types, such as egoistic, altruistic, and anomic suicide, based on regulation within society. However, nineteenth-century cultural and medical discourse sees suicide differently when it is conducted by a woman (Higonnet, 1985). Higonnet observed that suicide is gendered, and there is pseudo-pathology associated with female suicide, namely, female madness or *le mal d'amour*.

There are many contemporary feminist critiques that challenge the myths of women's suicide as madness. This performance is further explored as a philosophical decision of agentic resistance against patriarchal domination (Martín Villarreal, 2025). For many women, particularly those suffering as outsiders within their community, suicide represents a final means to unbind themselves from the "suffocating" intersection of racial and gender discrimination (Sharma & Kumari, 2025). Sharma and Kumari (2025) define resistance as a "psychological reaction" where an individual opposes or struggles against domination and forced behavior modification. The discussion about suicide and agency is expanded further by Jaworski (2021), who proposes a posthumanist agency in looking at women's suicide. She discusses how non-human objects are co-constituted through the intra-action of the physical body.

2. Methods

In addition to analytical qualitative methods through close reading of the novel, this study employs a multidisciplinary approach to unearth the novel's deeper discussion. I synthesize Helene Cixous's *Écriture Féminine* and Elaine Showalter's gynocriticism to interpret Raumanen's suicide as a deliberate act of political and social resistance. In doing so, the act of self-destruction won't be seen as merely a psychological condition, but a social fact. By integrating these lenses, I would like to move the traditional pathologization of female suicide and instead posit that the resolution of the novel is a refusal to accept patriarchal society.

2.1. Gynocriticism

Showalter (1986) defines gynocritics, a term adapted from the French *la gynocritique*, as a specialised discourse specifically concerned with woman as writer and the producer of textual meaning. This methodology shifts the focus away from the "feminist critique," which Showalter (1986) describes as being male-oriented because it examines woman as a consumer of male-produced literature and probes the stereotypes and misconceptions found in male-constructed literary history. Instead, the programme of gynocritics aims to construct a female framework for the analysis of women's literature, developing new models that are rooted in the study of female experience rather than simply adapting existing male theories.

A core topic of gynocriticism is the exploration of female culture and subculture, viewing women as a distinct group with their own symbols and social resources. Showalter (1986) argues that gynocritics begins at the point where scholars free themselves from the

"linear absolutes of male literary history" to focus on the occupations, interactions, and consciousness of women. This includes studying the internalised constructs of femininity and the unique relationships between women—such as those between mothers, daughters, and friends—as well as reproduction, ideas about the female body, and women's specific rites of passage. By prioritising these experiences, gynocriticism seeks to locate the "feminine not-said" by probing the fissures of the female text to find repressed messages that are often dismissed as *nondata* by patriarchal intellectual systems.

The evolution of this female tradition is summarised through three developmental phases: the Feminine phase (1840–1880), the Feminist phase (1880–1920), and the Female phase (ongoing since 1920). During the Feminine phase, women wrote to equal male intellectual achievements and often employed male pseudonyms to cope with double standards. This was followed by the Feminist stage of protest, where women rejected accommodating postures to dramatize the ordeals of wronged womanhood. Finally, in the Female phase, women turned to autonomous art, rejecting both imitation and protest as forms of dependency and instead using female experience as the primary source of creative inspiration and technical innovation.

Gynocriticism asserts the notion of the Authority of Experience as a principle that integrates women's intelligence, reason, and suffering into a new way of reading. Showalter (1986) maintains that feminist criticism must integrate female vision and scepticism to find a new language that can reconstruct the social, political, and cultural experience of women. This approach challenges the "God Method" of patriarchy that sets limits on what can be discussed by insisting that female experience is not merely emotion but a valid intellectual foundation for literary theory.

2.2. *Écriture Féminine*

Hélène Cixous's central methodological concept is *écriture féminine*, or feminine writing, which she presents not merely as an aesthetic style but as a radical, transformative act of reclamation. At its core, this method requires that "Woman must put herself into the text-as into the world and into history-by her own movement" (Cixous, 1976: 875). This directive establishes writing as a primary site of struggle against how men write which Cixous described as "the phallogocentric tradition" (Cixous, 1976: 879) that has historically marginalized women.

Methodologically, this process begins with the physical body, which Cixous suggests that there are two levels that women should work on in order for women to write

themselves. Firstly, "writing through their bodies" (Cixous, 1976: 880), then secondly "seizing the occasion to speak" (Cixous, 1976: 880) to physically materialize thought, letting the "flesh speak true" (Cixous, 1976: 881) and signifying meaning with the body itself.

To illustrate her method, Cixous use an example of the word *voler*, which carries the double meaning of "flying" and "stealing". By using this double-sided word, Cixous conveys the message that if women are to ever *fly* and soar on their own, they must first *steal* back from men their right to speak. This method allows the female subject to \disorienting established structures. By *stealing* away from the cultural confinement of patriarchy, women can *un-think* the unifying, regulating history that homogenizes forces and herds contradictions into a single battlefield.

Furthermore, this writing the body serves as a catalyst for subversive thought and an initial phase in the transformation of social and cultural structures (Cixous, 1976: 879). It is described as an *insurgent writing* that allows women to carry out "indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history" (Cixous, 1976: 879). By inscribing her own unique history, the female text becomes *volcanic*, bringing about a "material upheaval of the old property crust" that carries masculine investments (Cixous, 1976: 888).

Finally, Cixous's method is one of de-specularization and unhoarding, moving beyond the hierarchizing exchange of phallogocentric systems. It is a practice of differentiation that celebrates the infinite richness of individual constitutions rather than adhering to classifiable codes. Through this practice, as explored in the conversation history, writing becomes the means by which a woman constitutes herself as a sovereign subject, capable of flying into a brand-new history of life.

3. Result and Discussion

This section is divided into two parts. The first presents a close reading through the lens of Showalter's gynocriticism, demonstrating that the precondition leading to Raumanen's demise is ideological and systemic. The subsequent section examines how the act of suicide constitutes a form of women writing with their own bodies, as theorized by Cixous.

3.1. The Failure of Patriarchal Hero

As mentioned earlier in this article, Raumanen is a tragic heroine, but her downfall is entirely caused by Monang, Raumanen's boyfriend. Monang is first described as a promising, young, and talented student. He knows his way around women and smooth talker, a Don Juan character. But Katoppo subverts this masculine trope to show how toxic

he can be. Monang is patriarchal hero who have both wealth and woman in the palm of his hand. Even when introduced, Raumanen firstly explained Monang's name which means victory: "*Namamu begitu gemilang, artinya "kemenangan". Tetapi, dalam pembinaan cinta kita, kau begitu kalah. Dan menyeretku ke dalam jurang kekalahanmu*". (Katoppo:2018, 1). This introduction subverts the traditional heroic trope who usually the man overcomes various obstacles for the damsel. Monang instead becomes the primary obstacle to Raumanen's survival. And this proves that his name is merely a label without substance.

Raumanen herself explain how Monang has predatory behaviour where women are treated as disposable objects to be discarded when finished. Within this patriarchal society, women are reduced to vessels for male *speculative enjoyment*, a devaluation Higonnet (1985) argues is characteristic of nineteenth-century literary traditions that seek to maintain male social standing by rendering the female subject passive. This is hinted at as Monang behaviour. In the novel, it is stated as banana leaf theory which means:

"Sudah dipakai, dibuang!" kata Lori menjelaskan. " Dengarlah nasihat Mama Lori, keke, dan jangan terlalu serius dengan Monang itu. Hatinya sebetulnya baik ... "
"Tetapi gila Perempuan," sambung Manen agak kesal. " (Katoppo:2018:26)

Not only that, Raumanen shows how Monang's lack of commitment on marriage which himself sees it as "*senjata yang dipakai wanita untuk memaksa pria menikahinya!*" (katoppo:2018, 59). This cynical view confirms the worldview of women as an enjoyment, not as a partner. This framing also shows Monang's moral failure, although in the novel Monang believes this is a reasonable way.

The novel suggested that Monang's behaviour is compounded by his inability to exercise autonomy within the rigid structures of Batak *adat* (customary law), which prioritises the purity of the male lineage over individual agency. This is clearly an agential cut that marks Raumanen as an outsider when Monang's sister, Miri, sends a letter to Raumanen that explains Monang's mother demands her son to marry a woman within their ethnic group, which articulates a demand for ethnic purity:

"Maafkan kalau Miri kalau menyakiti hatimu. Soalnya, Kak Monang adalah anak tertua dalam keluarga kamu, dan menurut adat kamu ia harus kawin dengan orang kamu juga. Orang tua kamu sudah tua, manen, dan sangat mengharapkan agar Kak monang segera kawin." (Katoppo, 2018: 98)

This letter explains the requirement for Raumanen to marry Monang which is to be also from Bataknese. This particular letter is framed not as a personal preference from

Monang's sister but as a nod to moral and religious obligation to "satisfy" their parents, thereby placing Raumanen's very existence as an obstacle to Monang's ancestral duty. Monang's spinelessness against his own tradition functions as a form of cowardice; Raumanen then described him as "*seorang anak yang tak pernah terpotong tali pusarnya*" (Katoppo, 2018: 95). This remark is not merely a mockery of Monang but a sign of how traditional hegemony delimits a man. The novel extends Monang's failure by juxtaposing him with Laung, who is also Batak and with his wife, Norah, from the US. Norah and Laung have already married and had a daughter, but Laung's family still insists on ditching Norah because she has been diagnosed as unable to have another child, a son, and to preserve Laung's lineage. This patriarchal system further marginalizes the protagonist by designating her as a perpetual outsider or the other. The novel describes a marital structure in the Monang family that puts Manen's position as a disposable other, as stated in the following quotations:

"Keluarga, masyarakat sesukunya. Apalagi bagi seorang pria. Harus kau mengerti ini, Manen. Keluarga, orang tua adalah darah daging sang suami. Istrinya cuma seorang pendatang, yang dapat disuruh pergi." (Katoppo, 2018: 44)

This *othering* of Raumanen's position shows how the patriarchal system also marginalized women even if ones have become a wife, which clearly puts women in a precarious position. The novel further shows how Raumanen's disposable position is affected by Monang's failure to secure the house they decorate together in Kebayoran. The matriarch's appropriation of this physical environment enacts a societal judgment that excludes Raumanen from the family structure. The house becomes a concrete symbol of Raumanen's erasure when it is taken over by Monang's mother and sisters which can be seen in this narration:

"sekalipun Monang pernah memperkenalkanku kepada kepala proyeknya sebagai calon istrinya—sehingga dijatahkan selah satu rumah instansi di kebayoran, yang kami rias bersama dan kemudian diduduki ibu dan adik-adiknya. Sedangkan aku sendiri, tak pernah boleh datang kesana lagi." (Katoppo, 2018: 75)

The ultimate cowardice of Monang that cost the life and future of Raumanen happened when Monang manipulated Raumanen to have premarital and unprotected coitus with him. Raumanen herself felt that she was hijacked by Monang, as he refused to wait until they were married before he sowed his seed inside her. This act of "sowing" without her consent is a pivotal moment of Raumanen's stolen autonomy and shattering her agency.

Upon learning of Raumanen's pregnancy, his initial, performative joy was suddenly choosing the name Omar for the child without consulting Raumanen first. However, Monang did not ask Raumanen how Raumanen feels, which she hid from him. As stated below:

“Manen tak berbicara. Anak laki-laki? Sedangkan laki-laki sifatnya semata-mata menyakiti, merusak, mencuri Aku tak mau mempunyai anak laki-laki. Aku tak mau mempunyai anak ...” (katoppo, 2018: 101)

Raumanen understood the consequences of having a baby which was taken lightly by Monang. Later, Monang changes his mind about the child and asks Raumanen to ask her friend, Phillip, a doctor and *“diharapkannya agar Dokter Philip “menolong” Manen menghilangkan seluruh tanggung jawab Monang ...”* (Katoppo, 2018: 125). He frames this procedure as a necessary step to avoid the difficulty of a child born too soon and to protect his own social standing and future peace with his family. This reaction constitutes the ultimate betrayal, confirming for Raumanen that she is not a beloved partner but a tramp and a burden who threatens his comfort. She realizes he is willing to let her suffer emotionally and force a doctor to break his vows simply so he can be free of his responsibilities.

Ultimately, Raumanen's path toward her demise is slowly defined by her hidden pregnancy, surveillance, and clinical condemnation by other male students in her college. This process began with the transformation of Raumanen's physical symptoms of nausea during a central committee meeting of the student movement. The hyper-public environment of the student office, once a place of intellectual agency, transforms into her prison. The pregnancy has not only cost her social life but also her future.

Raumanen's future was finally shattered when Doctor Philip conducted the Wassermann test to check Raumanen's pregnancy. She was diagnosed with syphilis as a result of Monang's sordid life and his history as a Don Juan. *“Dosa Monang, yang kotor hidupnya, dan telah turut menjerumuskan aku ke dalam kekejian perilakunya”* (Katoppo, 2018: 130). This clinical condemnation forced Raumanen to face two difficult options: having an *abortus provocatus* but bearing the burden of guilt for the rest of her life or ending her own life.

3.2. Writing the Body

Historically, the death of a beautiful woman has been treated as a poetical topic for the masculine gaze, often reducing female suicide to a symptom of female madness or a personal pathology that male reviewers use to dismiss the validity of a woman's experience. However, a gynocritical approach—which Elaine Showalter defines as a specialised discourse concerned with woman as the producer of textual meaning—repositions Raumanen from previously a passive consumer of male-constructed destiny to an active subject who uses her own death to force society to "read" her life on her own terms. This transition from passive suffering to a "reasoned refusal" of a world full of flaws is only made possible by Raumanen's role as the narrator of her own story, even from beyond the grave. By placing the "I" at the centre of the narrative apparatus, the text ensures that the protagonist puts herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement, shattering the snare of silence that traditionally governs women's lives.

In the phallogocentric tradition, the male hero is expected to provide protection and a future, yet Monang functions as a primary agent of Raumanen's material and social displacement. He treats Raumanen according to a predatory brand of masculinity that views women as disposable objects to be "discarded when finished," a concept echoed in the "banana leaf theory" I mentioned in the previous chapter. This commodification is a hallmark of the phallogocentric tradition that Cixous describes as self-admiring, self-stimulating, and self-congratulatory. This failure of the masculine protection system aligns with Showalter's observation that patriarchal societies define human relationships by male codes of paternity, money, and legal contracts, which often prove inadequate to meet the actual needs of the female subject.

Faced with this "clinical condemnation" following a syphilis diagnosis that brands her as "contemptible," Raumanen's suicide becomes a Cixousian act of writing the self through the body. Cixous argues that women have been driven away from their bodies as violently as from their writing; therefore, women must inscribe the breath of the whole woman into history to achieve liberation. This is clearly what Raumanen does in the novel. Her final moments are not similar to Ophelia's, into water or madness, but a voluntary and rational choice made in a world that offers her no respectable place to become who she wishes to be.

As the novel depicted that Raumanen final moment as aesthetized choice by inserting an excerpt from Kahlil Gibran's poem, we can see that this is a shift that reframes her suicide as an act of insurgent writing. As shown in here:

*“Tetapi aku, akhirnya Insaf, akhirnya diampuni-kini naik dan mekar, mencari
 kerinduanku.
 ‘... Karena maut dan kehidupan itu satu adanya,
 Sama seperti sungai dan Samudra satu jua.
 Karena mati itu tak lain dari berdiri telanjang dalam badai,
 serta bersatu dengan Mentari.
 Dan berhenti bernapas tak lain daripada mencuraikan nafsumu dari paasang surut
 yang tak kunjung henti,
 Hingga kau dapat naik serta mekar mencari Ilahi kerinduanmu.”
 (Katoppo, 2018:135)*

By doing that, we can read that in her final moment, she seizes the occasion to speak, ensuring her story is not miswritten by the male medical establishment or the family who sought to erase her subjectivity. She refuses to remain the "ailing or dead figure" on display for male mourners and instead becomes the sovereign subject of her own transition. This mystical transcendence allows her to find a God who is "Most Tolerant," asserting a spiritual liberation that bypasses the "niggardly lip service" of patriarchal institutions. Her narration from the afterlife acts as a volcanic upheaval, proving that the Medusa is not deadly but beautiful and laughing once she is looked at directly through the lens of her own experience.

Not only that, but the act of ending her own life was also written poetically. The blood flowing from her wrists, described as *"Dan darah yang mengalir dari tangannya, dalam remang-remang cahaya bulan itu tampaknya seperti pita-pita merah yang sangat indah, yang tak pernah dapat disambung lagi"* (Katoppo, 2018: 132) serves as the ultimate boundary-making practice that severs the oppressive social ties that bound her. This aesthetic transformation of her suffering into something "beautiful" aligns with Cixous's promise that beauty will no longer be forbidden once woman returns to her body and her own desires. By aestheticising her own death, Raumanen rejects the nineteenth-century archetype of the "drooping rag of a woman" and instead becomes a sovereign subject who explodes the law that sought to domesticate her. Her flesh speaks true as she signifies her refusal to be a "ready-made martyr," transforming her "sordid world" into a site of transcendent subjectivity. Cixous notes that feminine text cannot fail to be more than subversive; it is volcanic, bringing about an upheaval of the old property crust carrier of masculine investments.

Showalter suggests that we must look for the repressed messages of women in history by probing the fissures of the female text, and *Raumanen* as a whole text is a suicide note, which is the most profound fissure. The act of suicide is a social protest against a stressed life situation that forced her to choose between the prison of social disgrace and the

hell of a life without self-agency. Showalter also notes that women's literature often moves through a "Female phase" where women turn to female experience as the source of an autonomous art, rejecting both imitation and protest as forms of dependency. Raumanen's post-death narration represents this autonomous stage; she is no longer trying to match the intellectual achievements of male culture but instead creating a history of her own by choosing her own exit. She has constituted herself as a person capable of losing a part of herself—her life—without losing her integrity. Showalter argues that gynocritics begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history and focus instead on the newly visible world of female culture.

Raumanen's story is a vital document of radical reclamation. She demonstrates that even in a state of "mortal alienation," a woman can find the "key" to her own liberation through the act of writing her self. Her act of "freeing her breath" is a political strategy that exposes the violence inherent in traditional institutions while finding a way to "rise and flourish" on her own terms. By narrating her journey from the "abyss of defeat" to her union with the sun, Raumanen proves that a woman's writing can only keep going, knowing neither enclosure nor death.

As Cixous said, woman must write about woman, and in doing so, the novel has ensured that Raumanen's suicide is read not as a loss, but as a transcendence and resistance. The resonance of Raumanen's voice after death serves as a volcanic upheaval of the old cultural property crust. In the final pages of her story, she is no longer a hollow subject without agency but a vibrant subject who extends herself without ever reaching an end. The narration from the afterlife is the ultimate subversion of masculine representationalism, replacing passive dissolution with an energetic union with the sun.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion I would claim that the novel *Raumanen* transcends beyond just merely a cautionary tale about the dangers of patriarchy for women, but positions itself as a critique of a patriarchal system fundamentally incapable of accommodating intelligent and strong women. As Raumanen creates her own meaning as the narrator of her story, she authorizes how her story is told.

Though the novel at first glance depicts how ethnicity seems to contribute to discrimination against women, by close investigation, it is revealed that the novel clearly criticizes how patriarchy shapes ethnic traditions. The clash between strict Batak adat (customary law) and Raumanen's Minahasa background shows how tradition is coopted by

patriarchy in the name of ethnic purity. By questioning these ethnic boundaries, the novel shows how tradition can be used to exclude and maintain a system that limits individual growth.

Katoppo cleverly subverted the trope of the suicidal woman in fiction and made a narrative of how women reclaim their voice, even posthumously. Rather than Raumanen's suicide is read as a sign of defeat and madness, her decision to end her suffering that is brought by patriarchy represents a deliberate rejection of an unjust world. She asserts her agency and ensures that her narrative cannot be rewritten by those who sought to silence her. Her death is intended not as a quiet withdrawal but as a powerful statement. In the end, the suicide should be read as figurative and provocative liberation.

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