



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION OF BEDOUIN EGYPTIAN
WOMEN IN SELECTED NOVELS BY MIRAL AL
TAHAWI: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY
IN LIGHT OF RADICAL
FEMINIST THEORY

ZAINAB ABD ALI HAMMOOD



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi

THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2020



05-4506832



pustaka.upsi.edu.my



Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun
Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



PustakaTBainun



ptbupsi



UNIVERSITI
PENDIDIKAN
SULTAN IDRIS
لونیورسیتی قندیقن سلطان لدریس

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

Please tick (✓)

Project Paper

Masters by Research

Masters by Mix Mode

Ph.D.

| |
|---|
| |
| |
| |
| ✓ |

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

This declaration is made on the 15 / 12 / 2020

i. Student's Declaration:

I, **ZAINAB ABD ALI HAMMOD, P20161001001**, Faculty of Languages and Communication hereby declare that the dissertation / thesis for the Doctor of Philosophy titled (**patriarchal oppression of bedouin egyptian women in selected novels by miral al tahawi: an analytical study in light of radical feminist theory**) is my original work. I have not plagiarised from any other scholar's work and any sources that contain copyright had been cited properly for the permitted meanings. Any quotations, excerpts, reference, or re-publication from or any works that have copyright had been clearly and well cited.

Signature of the student

ii. Supervisor's Declaration:

I, **DR.LAJIMAN BIN JANOOR** hereby certify that the work entitled (**patriarchal oppression of bedouin egyptian women in selected novels by miral al tahawi: an analytical study in light of radical feminist theory**) was prepared by the above named student, and was submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies as a partial / full fulfillment for the conferment of Doctor Of Philosophy, and the aforementioned work, to the best of my knowledge, is the said student's work.

28/12/2020

Date

Signature of the Supervisor

DR. LAJIMAN JANOORY

REKTOR KANAN

JABATAN

SUSASTERAAN INJENJIRIS

UNIVERSITI SULTAN IDRIS





UNIVERSITI
PENDIDIKAN
SULTAN IDRIS
الـنـوـرـسـيـتـي قـنـدـيـدـيـن سـلـطـان اـدـرـيـس

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

UPSI/IPS-3/BO31
Pind: 00 m/s 1/1

INSTITUT PENGAJIAN SISWAZAH /
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

BORANG PENGESAHAN PENYERAHAN TESIS/DISERTASI/LAPORAN KERTAS PROJEK
DECLARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION/PROJECT PAPER FORM

Tajuk / Title: patriarchal oppression of bedouin egyptian women in selected novels by miral al tahawi: an analytical study in light of radical feminist theory.

No. Matrik /Matric No.: P20161001001

Saya / I : ZAINAB ABD ALI HAMMOD

mengaku membenarkan Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek (Kedoktoran/Sarjana)* ini disimpan di Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun) dengan syarat-syarat kegunaan seperti berikut:-
acknowledged that Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Tuanku Bainun Library) reserves the right as follows:-

1. Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek ini adalah hak milik UPSI.
The thesis is the property of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
2. Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan rujukan sahaja.
Tuanku Bainun Library has the right to make copies for the purpose of reference only.
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan Tesis/Disertasi ini sebagai bahan pertukaran antara Institusi Pengajian Tinggi.
The Library has the right to make copies of the thesis for academic exchange.
4. Perpustakaan tidak dibenarkan membuat penjualan salinan Tesis/Disertasi ini bagi kategori **TERHAD**.
The Library are not allowed to make any profit for 'Open Access' thesis/dissertation.
5. Sila tandakan (✓) bagi pilihan kategori di bawah / Please tick (✓) from the categories below:-



SULIT/CONFIDENTIAL

Mengandungi maklumat yang berdarjah keselamatan atau kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termaktub dalam Akta Rahsia Rasmi 1972. / Contains confidential information under the Official Secret Act 1972

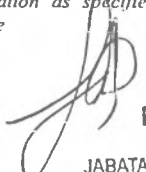


TERHAD/RESTRICTED

Mengandungi maklumat terhad yang telah ditentukan oleh organisasi/badan di mana penyelidikan ini dijalankan. / Contains restricted information as specified by the organization where research was done



TIDAK TERHAD / OPEN ACCESS


DR. LAJIMAN JANOOR
PENSYARAH KANAN
JABATAN BAHASA & KESUSASTERAN
UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS
(Tandatangan Pelajar/ Signature)
(Tandatangan Penyelia / Signature of Supervisor)
& (Nama & Cop Rasmi / Name & Official Stamp)

(Tandatangan Pelajar/ Signature)

Tarikh: _____

Catatan: Jika Tesis/Disertasi ini **SULIT @ TERHAD**, sila lampirkan surat daripada pihak berkuasa/organisasi berkenaan dengan menyatakan sekali sebab dan tempoh laporan ini perlu dikelaskan sebagai **SULIT** dan **TERHAD**.
Notes: If the thesis is CONFIDENTIAL or RESTRICTED, please attach with the letter from the related authority/organization mentioning the period of confidentiality and reasons for the said confidentiality or restriction.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Lajiman Bin Janoory for his invaluable support, guidance, and advice throughout my Ph.D. studies. I would equally like to thank all my colleagues and staff of the Faculty of Languages and Communication that have contributed, in one way or another, to the improvement of my work.

I am especially grateful to my husband, Sameer, who supported me in every way to pursue my studies. I would also like to express gratitude to my beautiful daughter, Fatima, and my lovely son, Ahmed, for their moral support and encouragement during the entire duration of my studies in Malaysia. I declare my gratitude and appreciation to Laith and Dawood for their support and for providing me with the necessary data in my study. I also thank my sister and aunt, whose generosity and kind-heartedness have always been invaluable to me.



Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to my friends and relatives, who did not hesitate to support me during my studies. I would also like to express my gratitude for the support provided by Sultan Idris Education University.





ABSTRACT

The study aims to analyze the patriarchal system, the patriarchal oppression towards female characters, and women's resistance to this patriarchal oppression in selected novels by Miral Al Tahawi namely *The Tent*, *Blue Aubergine*, *Gazelle Tracks*, and *Brooklyn Heights*. Radical feminism theory is used to analyze the selected texts as it considers patriarchy as the main root of women's oppression. The objectives of the research shed light on the oppressive patriarchal authority that uses its power to oppress Bedouin women, the types of oppression that Bedouin women are subjected to by the norms of oppressive patriarchal system, and the way Bedouin women resist patriarchal oppression. The study finds that, despite the strict Bedouin patriarchal system which imposes its oppressive rules on women, the Bedouin women try to release these restrictions in several ways. Al-Tahawi manages to provide a sense of identity for the female characters to free them from the oppression through education, self-awareness, and solidarity between women in resisting the patriarchal society, even if the resistance may lead to their death. As a conclusion, Bedouin women are a victim of strict patriarchal Bedouin customs that consigns them as the "other" in the society in the way that their lives are managed and controlled by the men. In order to free themselves, women must educate and unite and recognize that they are oppressed. The implications of the study indicated the power of the patriarchal system in the Bedouin community in shaping and controlling the lives of its women until the twenty-first century, and that it is necessary to shed light on the suffering of women politically, socially and economically in order to advance their reality for the better.





**PENINDASAN PATRIARKI TERHADAP WANITA
BADWI MESIR DI DALAM NOVEL-NOVEL
PILIHAN OLEH MIRAL AL-TAHAWI;
SATU KAJIAN ANALISIS MELALUI
TEORI FEMINISME
RADIKAL**

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan menganalisis sistem patriarki, penindasan patriarki terhadap watak-watak wanita, dan penentangan kaum wanita terhadap penindasan tersebut di dalam novel-novel oleh Miral Al Tahawi bertajuk *The Tent*, *Blue Aubergine*, *Gazelle Tracks*, and *Brooklyn Heights*. Teori feminis radikal telah digunakan untuk menganalisis teks terpilih tersebut kerana teori ini menekankan patriarki sebagai penyebab utama penindasan terhadap wanita. Objektif kajian ini ialah membongkar penindasan oleh kekuasaan patriarki yang menganiaya wanita Badwi, jenis-jenis penindasan yang dialami oleh wanita Badwi, dan cara-cara penentangan mereka terhadap penindasan tersebut. Kajian ini mendapati disebalik halangan yang ketat yang dibina oleh patriarki, wanita Badwi cuba membebaskan diri melalui beberapa cara. Al-Tahawi berjaya memberikan satu sumber identiti kepada watak-watak wanita bagi membebaskan mereka dari penindasan yang dialami melalui cara mendapatkan pendidikan, pembinaan kesedaran diri, dan kesatuan sesama mereka dalam menentang norma-norma masyarakat patriarki, walaupun ini boleh menyebabkan mereka terbunuh. Kesimpulannya, wanita Badwi adalah golongan yang menjadi mangsa adat patriarki Badwi yang menjadikan mereka sebagai jantina yang terasing di dalam masyarakat di mana kaum lelaki mengawal kehidupan mereka. Untuk membebaskan diri mereka, kaum wanita mestilah mendapat pendidikan dan bersatu dan memahami bahawa mereka adalah pihak yang tertindas. Implikasi kajian ini menunjukkan kuasa sistem patriarki di dalam masyarakat Badwi yang menjangkau abad kedua-puluh satu, dan adanya keperluan untuk mendedahkan kesengsaraan wanita dalam ruang politik, sosial dan ekonomi supaya mereka dapat menikmati kehidupan sebenar yang lebih baik.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK | ii |
| DECLARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | iv |
| ABSTRACT | v |
| ABSTRAK | vi |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vii |

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

| | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1.1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 1.2 | Background of the Study | 2 |
| 1.3 | Woman in Arab World | 9 |
| 1.4 | Arab Women Writers and Women Issues | 14 |
| 1.5 | Problem of Study | 19 |
| 1.6 | Research Objectives | 21 |
| 1.7 | Research Questions | 22 |
| 1.8 | Scope of the Study | 22 |
| 1.9 | Significance of the Study | 23 |
| 1.10 | Conceptual Theory | 24 |
| 1.11 | Organization of the Study | 28 |
| 1.12 | Conclusion | 30 |

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW






| | | |
|-----|---------------------------|----|
| 2.1 | Introduction | 31 |
| 2.2 | Definition of Feminism | 32 |
| 2.3 | Brief History of Feminism | 35 |
| 2.4 | Feminism in Arab World | 42 |
| 2.5 | Radical Feminism | 46 |
| 2.6 | Origin of Patriarchy | 50 |
| 2.7 | Woman in Literature | 55 |
| 2.8 | Woman in Arab Literature | 63 |

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| 2.9 | Review of Some Works of Miral Al Tahawi | 69 |
| 2.10 | Conclusion | 72 |

CHAPTER 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 3.1 | Introduction | 74 |
| 3.2 | Radical Feminist Theory | 75 |
| 3.3 | The Concept of Patriarchy | 86 |
| 3.4 | The Concept of Oppression | 96 |
| 3.5 | Male Domination and Gender Discrimination | 98 |
| 3.6 | Woman Subordination and Marginalization | 106 |
| 3.7 | Patriarchy in Bedouin society | 110 |
| 3.8 | Methodology | 113 |
| 3.9 | Conclusion | 116 |

CHAPTER 4 PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM IN NOVELS OF MIRAL AL

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
|  05-4506832 |  TAHAWI pustaka.upsi.edu.my |  Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah |  PustakaTBainun |  ptbupsi |
| 4.1 | Introduction | 117 | | |
| 4.2 | Patriarchal System in The Bedouin Society | 118 | | |
| 4.3 | Male- Dominance in The Selected Novels | 124 | | |
| 4.4 | Old Women Dominance in The Selected Novels | 139 | | |
| 4.5 | Conclusion | 149 | | |

CHAPTER 5 PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION OF BEDOUIN WOMEN

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 5.1 | Introduction | 151 |
| 5.2 | Bedouin Women in the Patriarchal Society | 152 |
| 5.3 | Women under Patriarchal in the Selected Novels | 154 |
| 5.4 | Discrimination and Restriction of women's Rights in the Selected Novels | 156 |
| 5.5 | Forced Marriage in the Selected Novels | 196 |
| 5.6 | Banning Education For Girls in the Selected Novels | 210 |
| 5.7 | Conclusion | 215 |

CHAPTER 6 BEDOUIN WOMEN RESISTANCE TO PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 6.1 | Introduction | 216 |
| 6.2 | Women Resistance to Patriarchal Oppression | 217 |
| 6.3 | Bedouin Feminist Voice in the Selected Novels | 219 |
| 6.4 | Spirit of Rebellion and Resistance in The Selected Novels | 221 |
| 6.5 | Solidarity of Women and Education as Keys of Emancipation | 228 |
| 6.6 | Separatism as Resistance to Patriarchal Oppression | 236 |
| 6.7 | Awareness-Raising as a Key to Resist Patriarchal Oppression | 240 |
| 6.8 | Conclusion | 243 |

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

| | | |
|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| 7.1 | Conclusion | 246 |
| 7.2 | Contributions of the Study | 256 |
| 7.3 | Implication of The Study | 256 |

| | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----|
| 7.4 | Recommendations | 258 |
| | References | 259 |



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the background of the study, including an exposition of the patriarchal society that envelops Bedouin Egyptian women and their constant struggle to find their identity and a more equal society with their men and definition of relevant terms such as patriarchy and cultural oppression. It also discusses the statement of the problem, objectives, and questions of the study, theoretical/ conceptual framework as well as the significance and limitations of the study. By using Radical Feminism as a theory, one can detect Al Tahawi's development of her female characters in her novels. She portrays an elaborate picture of women's lives of the 70s, 80s, and even 90s, which was governed by strict patriarchal Bedouin values. The researcher also investigates how Miral Al Tahawi's female characters struggle to find their identities or status in the male-centric society. In general, Al Tahawi allows us to witness the different attitudes of the female characters towards patriarchal oppression in her novels.





1.2 Background of the Study

A woman's life will be controlled by her mind; she will be committed to him through the marriage contract. Her family will also realize that she is sufficiently mature to make her own choice. They will agree with that choice and she will not fear their anger or other people's criticism. When women achieve these changes, men will know the value of women and will taste the pleasure of true love" (Amin, 2000, p. 80).

Women in the Western world have a voice and much freedom in their society. On the other hand, in many Middle Eastern countries, especially Arab countries, the majority of women have no rights and remain silent female other. Cultural and traditional practices of Arabic society work together and act as the codes of conduct of that society and built assumptions that are deeply rooted in society. These assumptions are considered by both women and men as a part of the cultural tradition. Men, based on these assumptions, have become more assertive. On the other hand, women in some societies have come to accept male chauvinism in cultural traditions, and as a result, they feel inferior to men (Malti-Douglas, 2018). Women, due to these assumptions have become passive victims to be sacrificed for the benefit of men. These assumptions have been compounded with traditional and cultural fundamentalism as espoused by the men. In the above-mentioned context, Arab feminists have had to compete with two realities: obedience and respect for the conduct of the masculine community roles or fight for their rights as a fellow human being. The situation in Arab countries can be stated as the problem of development and institutional deficiencies (Arab Human Development





Report, 2002). Although the Arabs are searching for a new identity within the context of the modern world, they still keep their older traditions and values. Their behaviors give the impression that they are primitive and brutal although prosperous people. At the same time, Arab women are considered as the "other". They are not allowed to have a voice and stay as speechless and oppressed others with no identity (Issa, 1990). The society still has a masculine mentality, although the political development and women's participation in the social and political arenas are progressing. Living in a patriarchal society where violence against women is obvious in many ways, the image of a woman come to be a typical Arab woman, as represented by the veiled woman who is cut off from social life. Although many women have achieved significant positions in society, their participation remains low and most of them are deprived of many rights and still fighting for their liberation (Haddad, 1994).



Oppression, according to Fakihi (2016) can be translated into many visible and obvious ways such as violence and marginalization. Acts of violence are an attack on a persons' physical and mental integrity. Despite decades of intervention, violence against women is still one of the most prevalent forms of human rights violations in the Arab world. Violence by adults can be against children or boys, while women are oppressed sexually and physically by men, and in some countries, they are more likely to experience all forms of sexual violence and harmful traditional practices like early and forced marriage (Kulczycki, 2011). Oppression against women often happens because of the difference in the concept of gender. Society raises men in a higher position while women are in a lower position. Men used to settle conflicts with violence since they are taught to be superior and bold (Walby, 1990) As such, it is believed that men should have control over women, and they see violent acts against women as their right to do.





The community gives boys and men an advantage to be dominating. Men's use of violence against women is classified as gender-based violence or domestic violence (Hooks, 2000). Violence can happen anywhere: at home, work, or on the street. Sometimes, women may be attacked by relatives or strangers, but most often they are hurt by those close to them, such as a brother, husband, or partner. In addition to that, wife-beating and rape are some of the violence against women perpetrated by their husbands (Walby, 1990). Domestic violence is a "softer" term that ignores the power and male dominance inherent in such violence, while patriarchy refers to the power structures that socialized men's and women's lives and rooted in power hierarchies related to gender. It refers to the greater sum of power by which men dominate women (Barker, 2016).



Women's experience of physical harm, violence, and loss of life and psychological pain leads to emotional damage to children and families throughout the world; and consequently, women lose their contribution to developing the society. There are also unlimited costs of broken individuals and distressed families. One of three women in the world is oppressed, forced to have sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. The abuser is almost one of her family members or someone is known to her (Heise & Ellsberg, 1999).

Patriarchal violence against women has different forms depending on culture, background, history, and experience, but it brings suffering and misery for women, their families, and the communities in which they settle (Kulczycki, 2011). According to Campbell (1989), violence against women includes verbal, physical, and all kinds of sexual assaults that women suffer. Joachim (2000) states that oppression against women





has been stated as the main public health and a big human rights issue. The research discusses such circumstances within the context of the Arab world, especially the Egyptian Bedouin Arabs. Al-Tahawi's texts are relatively new to Arabic literary texts in general, and in Egypt in particular. Miral Al-Tahawi is one of the generations of writers who differs from those who preceded them in fiction. In the 1990s Egyptian novelists focus their attention on the suffering of women and their status in patriarchal societies. During the 1990s, the Egyptian literature focused on urban communities, different social classes, and women's demands in those societies. However, the issues over Bedouin identity remained undiscovered until Miral al-Tahawi's novel *The Tent* (1996) was published, where Tahawi revealed a segment of society that had completely disappeared in Egyptian literature. The text of Tahawi was able to create an understanding of the Bedouin way of life and the status of Bedouin women and what they are exposed to in that patriarchal society. Al-Tahawi's texts represent a voice for the Bedouin women who are subordinated within the walls of the Bedouin house, which is tied to patriarchal bonds (El sadda, 2012).

Al-Tahawi illustrates that the term feminism induces unpleasant reactions, even among women who may adopt such postulates. Negative associations are presented when people hear the term feminism. Such negativity was found with the term feminism from the beginning of its foundation. In fact, in England, until the 1960s at least, the reaction to this term was usually pejorative (Walters, 2005). Therefore, some women withdraw from involving themselves with a movement looking for a fight for their rights.





As mentioned, Miral al Tahawi (1967) is a contemporary Egyptian Bedouin novelist. She is an assistant professor of Arabic language and culture at Arizona State University in the United States of America. She is the first novelist to present the Egyptian Bedouin community, Bedouin women suffer and struggle for freedom (Matter, 1997). She lives in Arizona, her latest station, in which she says "It is a desert" like her first land. Arizona State University considered her creative writing as an achievement for the state. She came from Cairo, the cultural hub of the Arab world, and one of the oldest and greatest cities in the world. She obtained her Master's degree and Doctoral degree from Cairo University. She works as an assistant professor at Arizona State University.

Although many Arab writers have embodied the suffering of women in their writings, and many studies have dealt with this problem, the situation of the Bedouin women remains vague and hidden from view because Arab writers did not address or dive into writing about it. Therefore, the problem of the Bedouin women remains unknown to the reader, surrounded by marginalization and ambiguity. Miral Al-Tahawi is the first Egyptian Bedouin writer who opens the door to reveal the suffering of the Egyptian Bedouin women behind the scenes. Al-Tahawi's novels deal for the first time with the situation of the Bedouin woman in that isolated, closed, and out-of-sight society. Therefore, this research will focus on uncovering the patriarchal system and methods of its application on Bedouin women, how Bedouin women suffered from oppression and marginalization, and what are the methods they followed to overcome the patriarchal oppression they are exposed to.





The importance of this research is that it studies and reveals the status of this feminist segment or group that has remained out of sight for a long time. Thus, this study will be a witness to what is happening to Bedouin women in that primitive, militant, and closed society. The female characters have been portrayed as oppressed women. It can be justified by the concurrence of Al Tahawi's active shaping of the heroines suffering to serve the situation. Thus, Al Tahawi's texts will be analyzed to how Bedouin women are represented as commodities under a patriarchally oppressed society. They are victims of the traditional and patriarchal type of society.

According to Millet (1977), patriarchy is an essential factor affecting civil and domestic life to restrict women. In another word, patriarchal ideology is a belief that the male is superior to women and has power over her. Thus, women suffering from oppression and patriarchy are the main subject in the works of many Arab women writers. This study brings to light the process by which Bedouin women are represented in Arab women's literary works as victims in the masculine community that controls and restricts their ambitions and prevents them to obtain their rights and reach their freedom. The novelist concentrates on women's resistance to oppression, discrimination, and obstacles to prove their identities, to be liberated and get their rights as human beings, and to show how almost these obstacles put an end to the life of most of the Bedouin women. Al Tahawi creates elaborate narratives with the intend of subverting oppressive structures in the Bedouin community. For the most part, women of the twentieth century led circumspect life, believing they belong to the home, but they were just tools to satisfy the male's need and stayed under tyranny. Societies limited the advancement of women by creating a patriarchally different and mediocre social order (Rashid, 2016).





Patriarchy compelled women into believing that their inferior status was natural and irredeemable. Thus, consistent with this, this study focuses on this subject through the analysis of Arab female writer's selected novels in the twenty-one century from the radical feminist theory's perspective. Al Tahawi's female characters in the four novels are placed under patriarchal oppression with the acknowledgment of their inferiority. Yet, we witness many female characters fighting to maintain that system that violates their identities and rights, while some suffer and struggle for emancipation.

As a Bedouin woman, Al-Tahawi embodies what she witnessed and lived in a conservative patriarchal environment. Since patriarchal oppression and discrimination against women has been a subject of discussion for decades (Asaqli, 2017), This study positions itself in the Bedouin discourse to explore how Al Tahawi highlights the fight by Bedouin women against the oppression and discrimination of the patriarchal society as well as how she imagines the problem of humanity in her novels.

This thesis examines the four novels to establish the extent to which Al Tahawi is engaged in centering women's issues in a patriarchal society. The importance of this study is highlighted by its contribution to highlighting the suffering of a large segment of Bedouin Arab women whose life is almost invisible and that they are subjected to persecution hidden from view due to strict traditions and customs which tries to conceal their voices, their concerns, and the persecution of their fathers by Masculine authority.





1.3 Women in Arab World

In Arab societies, women are an important subject of scholarly debates, discussions, and discourse for the social, political, and economic position that they occupy during the second half of the twentieth century. Oppression, sexuality, and liberation of Arab women are the main issues that have been discussed against the conventional background of the patriarchal Arab society. They continue to face and suffer discrimination, patriarchy, and huge barriers to reach their rights. The gap between the rights of men and women has been substantial. Social norms are deeply established, combined with strict interpretations of traditional laws; continue to relegate their positions in the community. They used to face systematic patriarchal discrimination in both laws and social customs as well as cannot occupy positions in politics and the private sector, and they are completely absent from the judiciary (Zuhur, 2009).



Yetiv (1979) states in one of the early groundbreaking works on this subject that the general condition of women in North Africa and Arab world is so defective. They are deprived of personal and social rights and freedom. They are subjected successively to the authority of their male family members and society. They are economically dependent and intellectually circumscribed and have many problems and challenges. These challenges consequently affect women's security and stability and stand as an obstacle to the humanitarian role and contribution towards her freedom and development.





Discrimination against women and gender-based violence is one of these challenges. In Arab countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq, women and girls suffer domestic abuse because the traditions and laws of these countries uphold male control over women. The role of the traditions and culture of these countries is frequently invoked to justify such oppression. Men cannot be expected to loosen their patriarchal dominance in such a society. This is clear in honor crimes that come as evidence of the belief that male family members should control the sexuality of women in the family and they should protect their reputation. So, men have the right to punish, and even kill women for blemishing family honor or for causing public gossip about themselves and their families (Zuhur, 2009). This violence causes pain, disability, and even death.

Violence is declared as a violation of human rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, in the declaration on the elimination of violence against women. The United Nations declaration defined violence against women as including physical, sexual, and psychological violence, in the family and the general community, which is perpetrated or condoned by the state and includes traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation (Zuhur, 2009). Specific types of domestic violence are considered common in the Middle East, including abuse by other family members, honor-related violence against both married and unmarried women, marriage by force, or temporary marriage. Violence includes abuse of women, female genital mutilation, wife-beating, snapping, kicking, or dragging by the hair. Female children also face all kinds of sexual abuse in the household, violence perpetrated against domestic workers, and all other forms of exploitation (Kulczycki, 2011).





The violence that takes place outside families, including sexual harassment and violence against girls and women in work and healthcare places is extremely prevalent in the Middle East (Ma, A & La Fahim, A, 2010). In addition to that, there are other forms of humiliation such as preventing women from going to work or study at schools or colleges. They are not allowed to leave the house and prevented even to visit their families or relatives. Another form of humiliation is ignoring women, using marital rape or forcing them to do sex, using expressions of extreme jealousy, and making threats against them or their children. Furthermore, betraying them with another woman, take another wife, and divorcing them without their knowledge. All these humiliations and oppressions are legal, culturally, and socially. This oppression is normalized to women and their communities. However, all these behaviors affect women and their children psychologically. Men confess to violence, but it is a stigma for women to pursue official complaints, talking about "private" grievance in public, particularly anything related to sexual violence (Kulczycki, 2011).

Gender-based discrimination includes laws that restrict marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody, and other aspects of women and family life. The community establishes that the man or the husband is the head of the family, and gives him the power over his wife's rights to work, travel, or take any decision. Women also have to obey her husband; this is prevalent with domestic violence which remains a significant problem (Way, 2006). Women in Arab land feel threatened and insecure in their communities. Women are less active than men in traditional activities such as political interest, discussion, voting, party, and union membership, and other activities such as demonstration, protests, and boycotts. This gap is explained as a result of a variety of factors such as cultural (attitudes and values), structural (divisions related to





age, education, social-economic status, etc.), and agency (organization and networks) (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). According to WHO (2005), violence rates and attitudes towards its acceptability are determined by the cultural factors that have been established and which play an important role in the formation of violence. Indeed, domestic violence is ignored in many cultures, including Arab culture. This is perhaps the most violent type of violence against women, thus, where this topic has great importance in Western countries and is deliberated to develop appropriate policies to reduce the phenomenon of violence against women. Violence against women in Arab countries is not highlighted as a major problem or concern despite the large scale of violence in society and its serious consequences on Women.

In Arab societies, despite recognizing the cases of extra-filial violence against women, domestic violence remains hidden. Many people, including victims, police, health and justice professionals, believe that the mistreatment of a wife is a normal, private, and a family affair and is never a concern, and therefore there is no intervention from the social or health care to save the victim (Haj Yahia, 1998a; Haj Yahia, 1998b; Haj Yahia, 2000b). This trend, which justifies the abuse of women in the house and rejects the legal approach toward women-abuse as a crime, is very acceptable because it is prevalent in the social-cultural context of Arab society; because it is considered something that belongs to the privacy and reputation of the family. This might lead to the fear of revealing women-abuse as a problem that will allow legal services to break through the boundaries of the family, thereby, ruining the family's good reputation as well as the cultural, educational, political, social, economic status of all family members, not to mention breaking up the family through divorce, separation, imprisonment, etc.





Moreover, family continuity and unity are important factors in Arab families, even when violence affects the life of the women of the family. This acceptance of violence is relevant to the patriarchal socio-cultural context of Arab families that stand up for male- domination and women's subordination in private as well as in the public sphere of life, as it is assumed that such as wife-beating is a duty of the husband. It is also related to the economic state of the woman and traditional marriage in which women abuse is justified (UNFT, 2001). The men's role in their families is thus authoritarian, and they assume responsibility for preserving the family structure by whatever means they feel are justified, including women's oppression such as violence. Therefore, oppression of women is justified by women's misbehavior, the conditions of man's daily life, and social traditions that indicate that women are also responsible for their oppression (Haj Yahia, 1998a; 1998b). According to El Zanaty et al., (1996) Egypt has



significant cases of domestic violence because of its poverty and a high rate of gender discrimination. Haj Yahia states that Arab men and women are prone to vindicate violence towards women if she does not obey her husband or reject his orders (El Zanaty et al., 1996).

In addition to that, oppression against women in Arab society takes another turn in Egypt, where the practices of female genital cutting still apply. According to El Zanaty and Way (2006), in 2005, 96% of women between 15–49 years had experienced genital cutting as a normal and essential for gender identification and marriage. Goode (1971) has stated that physical force and oppression of women are resources that men may use to control a woman's actions. People may use force and oppress their victims when they lack other ways or have not achieved their needs or desired ends by other means. Critics have claimed that a woman's socioeconomic independence, rather than





the overall economic resources of her household, may reduce the risk of experiencing domestic violence (Anderson, 2005; Dobash & Dobash, 1982; Kalmuss & Straus, 1982). Moreover, women with much less education than their husbands have had higher odds of experiencing oppression such as physical or psychological domestic violence (Yount 2005b; Yount & Carrera, 2006).

1.4 Arab Women Writers and Women Issues

According to Abrams and Harpham (2011), literature is a creative form of writing in which human experience is reflected. A literary work comes as a response to the experiences and problems of human existence and fate such as patriarchal oppression and discrimination against women. For many centuries, feminist activists keep struggling to voice their viewpoints about the oppression of women and men through their literary works. Throughout their literary works, either fiction or nonfiction, feminists explore women's live historical problems and issues. Morris (1993) illustrates that literature presents a powerful insight into the difficulties and disadvantages that women suffer from society. The imaginative ways that literary works have consisted of helping in portraying women's lives and make people rethink about the problem of gender and attempt to stop it. Besides, positive portrayals of the female which are created by feminist writers can help to raise a woman's self-esteem. Therefore, literature is an effective way to make the world acknowledge about patriarchal oppression and unequal treatment women suffer and inspire them to strive to obtain their rights.





Besides, literature can portray the problems of humans and inspire them, and thus, feminists use literature as a medium to explore the feminist movement. Subsequently, a theory of feminist literary criticism appears and focuses on the analysis of women's status in literature. Women, to free themselves from patriarchy and gender discrimination, should read as women, re-reading images of women created by men, resisting masculine viewpoints, and redrawing female fate that is usually presented to be the passive acceptance (Morris, 1993).

The Arab world has witnessed many feminist movements. It was mostly from the 1940s and 1950s; with the national liberation of many Arab countries like Egypt, Morocco, and Libya. Women in other Arab countries were an equal fighter in feminist struggles in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria (Sarnou, 2009). Many Arab writers, particularly female writers started the literary feminist career writing about different subjects that touch their lives, such as war or conflict or suffering of people in their country and it was a big adventure and very important change for an Arab female novelist. Arab female writers such as Huda Barakat, Hanane Sheikh, Sahar Khalifa, and others have taken it seriously. They wrote about issues of war. Although it is a difficult task to write about war for any author, Arab women writers restrict their novels with literary creativeness and freedom to convey their voice, thoughts, messages, and emotions regarding these conflicts and wars (Al Ramadan, 2017).

It is a remarkable thing that the first Arab novel was written by a woman. It was written by Zaynab Fawaz and published in 1899, followed by other talented Arab women writers such as A'isha al- Taymuriya and Worda al- Yaziji (Sarnou, 2009). It is obvious that Arab women, like all other women all over the world, act the role of





storytellers of generations. They write what is going around them and this literary genre is a genuine talent of literary writing. After the Second World War, Arab women receive gradual importance in social and educational spheres (Zeiden, 1994).

Thus, the development of the educational condition allowed women in getting the opportunity to build their philosophy of both individualism and a consciousness of a female identity that suffered isolation from the trend of feminism in the world (Sarnou, 2009). Arab women writers have reached great literary creativity in writing and they had an interest in many important political, cultural, and social issues. The literary works of some women writers that have criticized Arab society and the traditional roles of women as Ba'albaki (1936-) "AnaAhya'(ILIVE 1958), and Al-Aliha Al Masukhah "The Deformed Gods" has led to literary and social debates and discussions. Palestinian women writers, for example, become part of the Palestinian national identity by their writings like Fadwa Touqan (1917-2003). Other women writers like Liana Badr (1950-), Huda Barakat (1952) and Zhour Lounissi (1936-) and others have illustrated through their novels and writings the real situation and position of Arab women in Arab society and assured their readers that Arab women, though deprived of her political rights could be strongly involved in national political issues (Sarnou, 2009).

Lebanese female writers like Zaynab Fawaz (1890-1914), May Ziyada (1886-1941), and the Egyptian A'isha Tsimuriyya (1840-1902) are considered pioneers of Arab women literary works. Although most of the Arab women writers received little attention in the early twentieth century, attention was directed to Egyptian writer Nawal Saadawi (1931-) who was a well-known feminist In the 1960s-1970s. She explained the experience and fate of women and reflected a cultural context where a woman suffers





rape and violence in Arab society. In the 1980s, women, writers started to receive more attention and their works are translated into English such as the story of Zahra (1980) by the Lebanese Hanane a Shaykh (1945-) (Sarnou, 2009).

Cook (2004) states that women write about different topics related to their own lives to the situation of women in their society. Most of them wrote about war and violence in their countries. They write about migration that comes because of the situation in their societies. However, Cook argues that although Arab female writers were very careful not to write negatively about men or their societies, they have recently started to write about what is considered a taboo. With the progressing literary and intellectual agency, and motivate their desire to assume other forms of an agency; greater participation within their societies is clear in the growth of feminist movements



that appeared in Egypt.



Badran (1995) mentions that there are three stages of Egyptian feminist movements that emerged to fight against women's oppression. He adds that the first one took place in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. It is made by the writings of some female writers who represented "feminist awareness". This awareness was unfavorable to gender discrimination through the prevalence of poetry, prose, articles, and essays. This led to making individual and collective forms of activism and formed the last two stages of Egyptian feminist movements. The early feminist movements were mostly upper and middle-class women and others of rural gentry. Their literary writings reflect their awareness and demanded women's right to education and work (Booth, 2001).





The feminist movement in Arab literature transformed from a movement deals with personal freedom and active social roles into a new style of the literary movement concerning social awareness. It has not always received the concern it deserves. Yetiv (1979) for instance, mentions that the attempt of most Arab women writers to show their literary writings, their problems, and their suggested solutions as rebellious and escapist.

This view may be acceptable in the case of the of early feminist such as Colette Khuri (1937), but the writings of many Arab female writers in the late twentieth century such as Sahar Khalifa (1941-) and Huda Barakat (1952) detect the national style of the feminist movement in Arab literature that refused submission. It is noteworthy that the most famous female writer who left a significant impact on the feminist literary scene is Nawal El Saadawi (1931) who the founder of Arab women's solidarity Association.

In her writing, El Saadawi focuses deeply on the problems of women who had not been addressed before and hidden under the cloak of silence, such as female genital mutilation, and criticizes patriarchal society (Hitchcock, 1993). In the late 1950s, Lebanese writer Layla Ba'albaki (1936) generalized what is considered the first (revolutionary feminist movement) in Arab literature (Awwad, 1983). Although the modern literary works of Arab women writers arose in the last decades of the nineteenth century, it can be clearly seen recently that those works have attracted the concern of critics and scholars. In the 1990s, the Bedouin writer Miral Al-Tahawi provides us with a part of the suffering of the Bedouin women who have long hidden behind the restrictions of the forbidden. Despite the many writings that dealt with the suffering of Arab women at all levels, the suffering of the Bedouin woman remained neglected until it appeared in the narrations of Miral al-Tahawi.





She introduces the world to Bedouin society, patriarchal authority, and the way they judge and how they judge the Bedouin women. She focuses on topics related to the status of Bedouin women and different taboos in that society: "You have a lot of cultural traditions of a society that has been through a difficult time. So you can find yourself in a place that is inspiring, but it's painful. It is like an oasis, like isolation" (Bady, 2014, p. 45). Her literary production is four novels, namely *The Tent* (1996), *Blue Aubergine* (1998), *Gazelle Tracks* (2008), and *Brooklyn Heights* (2011), all describe the patriarchal oppression of Bedouin woman (Bady, 2014)

1.5 Problem of the Study

Though there has been a considerable amount of scholarly work exploring and tackling Radical feminist theory and the concept of patriarchy in Western and Arab literature, in general, there has not been a concern for Bedouin literature, especially that of Egyptian Bedouin writers. Still, the selected Bedouin novels, *The Tent*, *Blue Aborigine*, *Gazelle Tracks*, and *Brooklyn Heights* have not been studied using the approach employed in this research study. Issues like images of women, their identity, and oppression over them were those mostly dealt with in the academic works covered in the review of literature. Another important point is that the importance of this research stems from what distinguishes the detail of oppression against Bedouin women from others, as it represents a traditional stereotype in Bedouin society, as the male considers it the basis of the Bedouin home system.





These academic studies lack the direct reference to the status of the Bedouin women under the patriarchal system. Radical feminist theory is employed in considering this concept carefully in the text of the selected novels of Miral Al Tahawi. I seek to specify that Bedouin women suffer patriarchal oppression supported by the social silence and they have a sense of awareness of that what they are face is patriarchal oppression and seek for their rights under the umbrella theory of radical feminist more specifically, its basic related issues like their rights in education, choosing the partner, take their own decision. The way of examining the female characters will plainly prove what Kate Melleit (1977) has claimed that women will claim their rights when they recognize that what they face is patriarchal oppression.



The importance of this research is that it studies and reveals the status of this feminist segment or group that has remained out of sight for a long time. they are subjected to persecution hidden from view due to strict traditions and customs which tries to conceal their voices, their concerns, and the persecution of their fathers by Masculine authority.

Thus, this study will be a witness to what is happening to Bedouin women in that primitive, militant, and closed society. This study positions itself in the Bedouin discourse to explore how Al Tahawi highlights the fight by Bedouin women against oppression and discrimination of the patriarchal society as well as how she imagines the problem of humanity in her novels. This thesis examines the four novels to establish the extent to which Al Tahawi is engaged in centering women's issues in a patriarchal society.





1.6 Research Objectives

The first objective of this research is to determine patriarchal authority and system by analyzing four novels of Miral Al Tahawi from a radical feminist perspective. To achieve that, the representation of the patriarchal system in the Bedouin Egyptian society of the selected works of Miral Al- Tahawi will be examined. This will underscore the role of the oppressive male in oppression of women in the Bedouin Egyptian society.

The second objective is to explore types of patriarchal oppression of female characters in novels of Miral Tahawi. This will contribute to understanding how Bedouin women are oppressed by their family members or society and their status of Bedouin women under the patriarchal system and the oppression they suffer.

The third objective is to find the ways of resistance that the female characters adopt against the patriarchal oppression that they are subjected to in the patriarchal Bedouin society. Through the female characters employed by Miral Al Tahawi in her novel, the reaction of Bedouin women to the restrictions imposed on them will be monitored.





1.7 Research Questions

This research intends to answer the following questions:

1. How is Bedouin patriarchal authority presented in the novels by Miral Al Tahawi?
2. What are the ways of oppression that female characters face in the novels by Miral Al Tahawi?
3. How do the female characters resist the patriarchal oppression in the novels by Miral Al Tahawi?

1.8 Scope of the Study



The present study will focus on providing an analysis of four major works of a contemporary Arab female writer which presents the Bedouin patriarchal ideology. These texts have been evaluated in line with the gender discourse, and woman's position in Bedouin society. The study is restricted within the framework of the radical feminist theory. In the four novels, we will investigate different forms of oppression of women that are depicted by the writer and how the Bedouin patriarchal system subverts their lives and identities. The scope of this study is restricted to the works of Miral Al Tahawi. The novels under study are *The Tent* (1996), *Blue Aubergine* (1998), *Gazelle Tracks* (2008), and *Brooklyn Heights* (2011). They deal with issues concerning patriarchal oppression and discrimination against women in Bedouin society in Egypt in the twentieth century. The writer tackles in her novels, the women's lives, and their sufferings and struggles for liberation. The researcher will attempt to explore the fact that Bedouin social culture tends to equate women with their supposed inferior role





through the novels of Miral Al Tahawi. The traditional characterization of the female as irrational and incapable of abstract reasons was given as a justification to prevent them functioning as men did, reflected in Miral Al Tahawi's works which concern female identities struggling in a patriarchal system, where they are treated as secondary beings or outcasts. Therefore, this study suggests the relevance of the suffering of women and challenging the culture in the society they live in.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This research study is significant in that it meets the need for academic and critical studies on contemporary Bedouin theoretical and literary production to fill the gap in similar references in the literature about it. Most of the academic studies done before have dealt with Arab novels that replicate comparable themes or concepts. But still, the specific point of view concerning Bedouin novels that reproduce the concept of patriarchy from a radical feminist perspective has not been covered by similar studies in this literary field.

Also, it will contribute significantly to the field of feminism in literature, especially the field of novel by giving an overview of the Bedouin feminist literature concerning women's lives, status, and literature. In addition, it critically analyzes the issue of gender and women's oppression in Bedouin Egyptian society as well as exploring how the author projects women's voice in her stories, the oppressive gender structure that pushes women to brim as well as how women traverse back to the center. Moreover, it explores societal attitudes towards women, duties, and activities assigned





to a specific gender. It identifies the way that Miral Al- Tahawi shows a clear picture of Arab Bedouin women under patriarchal oppression in the Bedouin society as well as the way they lost their rights under such unequal Bedouin society.

In Addition to that, it provides analytical materials of four novels of the Egyptian Bedouin novelist Miral Al-Tahawi, *The Tent* (1996), *Blue Aubergine* (1998), *Gazelle Tracks* (2008), and *Brooklyn Heights* (2010). It also extends our knowledge about the state of women in general and feminist literature in particular. Thus, the use of radical feminism addressing patriarchal oppression helps to show the way the patriarchal society oppressed women and their ways to overcome patriarchal oppression in such a society. Furthermore, it will add to the field of radical feminism perspective and contribute to the generalization of the study of women's oppression in the patriarchal



1.10 Conceptual Theory

This study will be analyzed from the perspective of radical feminist theory. Radical feminism is trying to obtain a way of criticizing male's dominance and involve in the development of a confirming vision of the society and the state of women (Mackinnon, 1989). Patriarchy is the fundamental term that radicalism seeks to combat, and was developed by Kate Millett in her book *Sexual Politics* (1969) amongst others, (Brownmiller, 2005; Firestone, 1974; French, 1985; Hartmann, 1997). This term has been modified from the original meaning of "Father's Rule" by Kate Millett to describe men's dominance and authority over women. It is the imbalance of gender power for





the necessities required by society. According to Mellitt (1977), the patriarchal system is maintained and sustained because society has adapted to this policy. This system exists in all institutional ideologies such as religion, education, media, state, and literature. Moreover, radical feminism stands against the belief that the women's natural role is in the home, and humans are distinguished according to biological sex, which is determined by reproductive physiology (Millett, 1977).

The use of the concept of patriarchy will be a way to understand the domination and oppression over Bedouin Arab women in their constant struggle to gain their freedom and rights stolen by men. This study will reveal the process of patriarchal oppression in the postulation of Radical feminism, which states that patriarchy is the main cause of women's oppression and domination. According to Kate Millett (1977), patriarchal oppression is practiced directly or indirectly in public or domestic life to restrict women and limit their freedom. Millet mentions that there are two parts of patriarchal ideology:

Some beliefs legitimize male's authority and make them dominant in their relationship with women as the laws of arranged marriages between families. The second part is a set of attitudes or rules that support males-power and strengthen them against wives who are seen as violating the idea of the patriarchal system of a family (p. 222-3).





Millet believes that the ideological structure of the patriarchal system consists of a set of ideas, explaining the social world, and leads to corruption and abuse of power around us. The dominance of the patriarchal ideology of men spreads and increases its social power in this “world by gaining the minds and emotions of people, including the Church and the family. She also mentions in her *Sexual Politics*:

Sexual politics obtains consent through the "socialization" of both sexes to basic patriarchal politics concerning temperament, role, and status. As to status, a pervasive assent to the prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male, inferior in the female. The first item, temperament, involves the formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category (masculine and feminine), based on the needs and values of the dominant group...Aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, virtue, and ineffectuality in the female. This is complemented by a second factor, sex, role which decrees a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct, gesture, and attitude for each sex. In the term of activity, the sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to the female, the rest of the human achievement, interest, and ambition to the male....those awarded higher status tend to adopt roles of mastery, largely because they are first encouraged to develop temperaments of dominance"(p.26).





From a feminist point of view, Millett explains that the sex policy applied in society is a policy aimed at serving males and making them the predominant sex in society. As a result, men have all the privileges that this patriarchal policy provides. At the same time, the process of promoting the sex of men excludes women from their right to equality. Consequently, the role of women in society is subject to muteness, motherhood, and local girls. In this way, patriarchal society has directed the negative roles of women and made them subordinate to men or others.

Millett's definition of sexual politics reveals the low status in which women are placed by the patriarchal authority to maintain a sexual hierarchy that gives priority to the male in everything. She summarized her definition of politics in these lines:



When one group rules another, the relationship between the two is political. When such an arrangement is carried out over a long period it develops an ideology (feudalism, racism, etc.). All historical civilizations are patriarchies: their ideology is male supremacy (p.23).

The sexual policy shows women's rights and motivates them to be aware of their situation at home and in society, to urge them to take their right to equality with men and to achieve their autonomy in society, and to reject the subordination established by patriarchal policy. The postulations of radical feminists are applied to examine the oppressed female characters and their reaction to the patriarchal oppression as practiced in Miral Al Tahawi's novels *The Tent*, *Blue Aborigine*, *Gazelle Tracks*, and *Brooklyn Heights*. By understanding the sexual politics of men, women will recognize their rights and will be aware of their situation under patriarchal oppression in their





societies or at home, and claim for liberation from men's oppression as well as be as independent and self-determining individuals. The radical theory concept is based on the idea of oppression and domination. Radical feminists view that patriarchal gender relations are the main cause of women's oppression. This idea differs from liberal feminism's that legal systems are the main cause of women's oppression and Marxist feminism theories that consider social class is the root of women's oppression (Willis, 1984).

The main political oppression agreed upon by all branches of the radical movement is the oppression of women, which is the cause of all other types of oppression that are often determined by time and place (Mitchell, 1971, Reid & Stratta, 1989). According to Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex* (1974), gender discrimination based on sexual structure greatly affects the lives of women in all aspects. It is so deeply embedded in society that recognition of it is forgotten. Following this, radical feminism seeks to normalize women's lives and make them natural.

1.11 Organization of the Thesis

This study in its entirety is divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter, an introduction to the topic of the research is provided. It gives a general background of the main topic of the thesis, delineates the ground of the theory, presents the statement of the problem, and presents the objectives of the study as well as the significance and scope of the study. It gives an overview of women as a topic in Arab literature and a biography about the writer. The second chapter is devoted to presenting the relevant





literature related to the study. It provides a definition of feminism and a brief history of the feminist movements in the world and the Arab world as well as a definition and clarification to the radical feminism and the origin and the meaning of patriarchy. In addition to that, this chapter provides literary reviews of studies handle the status of women in literary works written by International and Arab writers. A conceptual framework is included.

Chapter Three is intended to provide the methodology of the study. An explanation of the radical feminism theory is presented as well as patriarchy as the root of oppression. Other concepts of patriarchal oppression, including male dominance, subordination, marginalization, gender discrimination are presented. An important aspect of this chapter is the review of patriarchy in Bedouin society as well as the status of women in Bedouin society such as marriage and her status within the family. Chapter Four includes analysis is applied to the texts to explore the patriarchal system and male authority in the Bedouin society in four novels of Miral Al Tahawi: *The Tent*, *The Blue Auborin*, *The Gazelle Trucks*, and *Brooklyn Heights*. Chapter Five provides an analysis the ways of oppression imposed on the Bedouin female in four novels of Miral Al Tahawi: *The Tent*, *Blue Auborin*, *The Gazelle Trucks*, and *Brooklyn Heights*. Finally, Chapter Six presents the Bedouin female characters' resistance to patriarchal oppression they face in their patriarchal societies. Chapter seven gives the conclusion of the research with an evaluation of how radical feminism can contribute to the rationalization of women's oppression in the patriarchal system of the Bedouin society of Miral Al Tahawi.





1.12 Conclusion

An overview of the patriarchal oppression and violence against women in general and particularly in the Arab world has been provided in this chapter, where studies show that Arab women are subject to several repressive practices that often result in silence. Besides, the chapter included the reasons for choosing the four novels of the Egyptian Bedouin writer Miral Al Tahawi and the purpose of analyzing them according to Radical Feminism, since radical feminism is based on the idea that patriarchy is the main cause of women's oppression. An introductory overview of Arab feminist literature and the most important topics dealt with Arab women writers in the Arab world presented to give us an idea about the feminist literary writings in the Arab world.

A brief introduction of the Bedouin Egyptian writer Miral Al-Tahawi is also hinted at the fact that the study is based on presenting the problems faced by Bedouin women in her novels, as well as on an analysis to explore the patriarchal oppression of female characters in her four novels. The chapter ends with a definition of the terms used in the study.

