

Patriarchal Structures in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*

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Abstract- *This study investigates the representation of patriarchal structures in Nawal El Saadawi's God Dies by the Nile, focusing on how political authority, religious manipulation, gendered violence, and socio-economic inequality collectively sustain the oppression of women. Set in the rural Egyptian community of Kafr El-Teen, the novel depicts patriarchy as an institutionalised system reinforced by political power, cultural expectations, economic deprivation, and the manipulation of religious beliefs, rather than as mere individual male domination. Employing womanism as its primary theoretical framework, the study analyses the experiences of Zakeya and other female characters to reveal the interconnectedness of gender and class oppression. The analysis demonstrates that El Saadawi illustrates how powerful male figures exploit social institutions to legitimise their authority, silence women, and suppress challenges to established structures of domination. Simultaneously, the novel portrays women as individuals capable of awareness, resistance, solidarity, and confrontation, rather than as passive victims. The findings indicate that God Dies by the Nile presents women's liberation as inseparable from broader social transformation. The study concludes that El Saadawi's critique of patriarchy extends beyond gender relations to interrogate political corruption, economic exploitation, institutional injustice, and the ideological structures that perpetuate inequality. Through this representation, the novel advocates for a society based on justice, equality, human dignity, and the recognition of women as autonomous participants in social life.*

Keywords: *Patriarchy, Womanism, Gender Oppression, Religious Manipulation, Political Power, Gendered Violence, Social Inequality, Nawal El Saadawi.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy continues to function as a primary social structure responsible for the historical production and maintenance of gender inequality. It operates through systems, institutions, traditions, and beliefs that

privilege male authority while restricting women's access to power, resources, autonomy, and social recognition. While patriarchal oppression is frequently evident within marriage and family relationships, its influence extends into politics, religion, economic organization, education, and other institutions that shape daily life. Literature has therefore emerged as a significant medium for exposing these inequalities and interrogating the social structures that render them natural, legitimate, or inevitable.

African women writers have made substantial contributions to literary discourse on gender inequality by depicting women's experiences within distinct cultural, political, and economic contexts. Their works often demonstrate that women's oppression is shaped by intersecting factors such as class, poverty, cultural expectations, religion, political power, and access to education. Simultaneously, these writers contest portrayals of African women as passive victims by illustrating the diverse strategies women employ to negotiate, resist, and confront oppressive conditions.

Nawal El Saadawi occupies a prominent place within African and Arab feminist literary traditions due to her persistent critique of patriarchal institutions and the social conditions that constrain women's freedom. Her fiction consistently explores the interconnections among gender inequality, sexuality, economic exploitation, religion, class, political authority, and institutional violence. Instead of attributing female oppression to isolated actions by individual men, El Saadawi exposes the broader systems that facilitate such acts and shield those who benefit from them. Saadawi presents the rural community of Kafr El-Teen as a social environment in which political, religious, economic, and patriarchal authority operate together. The Mayor occupies a position of enormous influence

and represents more than individual male power. His authority is reinforced by his political status, social privilege, economic advantage, and relationships with other powerful members of the community. Consequently, the oppression experienced by women occurs within a system in which those responsible for injustice are often protected by the same institutions that should provide justice and security.

The novel further investigates the manipulation of religion as a tool of domination. El Saadawi does not depict spirituality as inherently oppressive; instead, she illustrates how religious language and beliefs can be selectively interpreted by individuals aiming to legitimize unequal social relations. Consequently, obedience, patience, sacrifice, and silence are framed as moral imperatives for women, while male authority is positioned as natural or divinely sanctioned. This manipulation restricts women's capacity to challenge injustice, as resistance may be construed as a breach of religious or cultural norms.

Political oppression also serves to reinforce patriarchal authority within the novel. The consolidation of power among a privileged male elite obstructs vulnerable community members from accessing justice. Poor women are especially marginalized, as the intersection of gender and economic status restricts their access to institutions that could protect their interests. As a result, fear and silence function as key mechanisms of social control, with individuals recognizing that challenging authority may lead to punishment, exclusion, or increased suffering.

Gendered violence represents a further manifestation of patriarchal power in *God Dies by the Nile*. Women are subjected to physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence, all of which serve to maintain male dominance. The impact of such violence is intensified by a lack of accountability and by cultural norms that encourage women to endure suffering without openly opposing their oppressors. El Saadawi thus links violence against women to institutional inequality, rather than portraying it solely as a private matter.

Economic inequality further exacerbates the vulnerability of women in Kafr El-Teen. Poverty

restricts access to education, employment, financial independence, and other resources necessary for challenging oppressive conditions. As a result, poor women face multiple forms of marginalization, as gender discrimination intersects with class exploitation. This convergence of patriarchy and economic deprivation indicates that women's liberation requires not only changes in gender relations but also the transformation of broader structures of inequality.

Despite its depiction of severe oppression, *God Dies by the Nile* does not entirely deny women agency. Through characters such as Zakeya, El Saadawi illustrates that domination can foster awareness and resistance. Female silence gradually gives way to recognition, anger, solidarity, refusal, and confrontation. The novel thus transcends the portrayal of female suffering to examine the potential for challenging long-standing oppressive structures.

Within this context, the present study analyzes the representation of patriarchal structures in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*. It focuses on religious manipulation, political oppression, gendered violence, and social inequality as interconnected mechanisms sustaining patriarchal domination. Employing a womanist theoretical framework, the study also examines El Saadawi's portrayal of women's resistance and argues that gender justice necessitates comprehensive cultural, economic, political, and institutional transformation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The critical analysis of *God Dies by the Nile* goes beyond El Saadawi's investigation of patriarchy by connecting gender domination with class inequality, political corruption, religious manipulation, and exploitation in the countryside. The oppression of women in the novel is closely tied to the community's social and economic hierarchy.

Shihada states that "women in *God Dies by the Nile* are victims of the patriarchal class system which has been consolidated by politics, religion, and social customs" (162). This description shows the multiple aspects of female oppression in the novel. Patriarchy

is not viewed as a private agreement between men and women; rather it is supported by political authority, the economic hierarchy, religious ideology, and social convention. He also says that "in order for the patriarchal class ideology to continue as an oppressive system, brutal measures must be introduced and put into practice in society" (162). This is the reason why violence is an essential part of the novel's structure. Power is kept in place through belief, coercion, fear, sexual exploitation, and the vulnerability of the poor.

From this point of view, El Saadawi's objective, as Shihada says, is "to break down the patriarchal class system by exposing its sinister side, where women are preyed upon, raped, and destroyed simply because they are women" (162). The novel does not content itself with recording suffering but instead reveals the political and economic systems which keep it going. Characters such as Zakeya and Fatheya take on the role of resisters, illustrating how gender and class come together to leave poor women vulnerable, while at the same time showing that domination does not eliminate female agency.

Diana Royer also points out the political aspects of *God Dies by the Nile*. She points out the political aspects of *God Dies by the Nile* and claims that the novel "does not hold back in criticising an immoral and hypocritical government figure and his lackeys who feel no sense of responsibility towards the land or the people who work it" (136). Her interpretation connects the exploitation of women with the wider exploitation of the peasantry, incorporating women's oppression into an unequal social system in which those in authority exploit others. It also shows how religious language can be used to justify the existing inequalities. When people in privileged positions use ideological structures to justify their domination, religious, political, and patriarchal authority become mutually reinforcing.

Isam M. Shihada uses socialist feminism to claim that the women in the novel are victims of a patriarchal class system which has been established through politics, religion and social customs (162-64). As Shihada points out, violence, rape, sexual exploitation, double moral standards and the exploitation of women who are paid poorly result from the interaction

between class domination and patriarchy and not from gender inequality alone (176). It is for this reason that his interpretation is so valuable when it comes to explaining why poor women remain especially vulnerable to men who have both economic, social and political authority.

Luma Balaa does the same when dealing with the novel from a socialist feminist point of view, with a particular focus on religion. She maintains that El Saadawi does not see Islam as the root of women's oppression; rather, it is political and patriarchal authorities who manipulate religion, traditions and superstition in order to justify their domination of women (187-89). Balaa's distinction is important since it avoids a simplistic interpretation that treats religion as inherently responsible for the oppression depicted in the novel.

The Mayor therefore stands for more than just individual male immorality. According to Shihada, he represents a patriarchal class system which is safeguarded by political position, economic privilege and social authority (163-64). The abuse endured by poor women in Kafr El Teen thus shows how class and gender overlap: their vulnerability is greater since their oppressors hold a number of different forms of institutional power at the same time.

Charity Azumi Issaka, Confidence Gbolo Sanka and Elvis Resque go on to consider questions of power and resistance; by combining Foucauldian ideas concerning discourse and power with feminist theory, they claim that the patriarchal discourse does not cover all the novel's power relations, for women also use silence, rebellion, female bonding and other less obvious forms of resistance to oppose the dominant structures (194-95). The value of their analysis lies in the fact that it stops the women of Kafr El Teen from being seen merely as helpless victims.

Shihada also sees Zakeya's last encounter with the Mayor as the climax of resistance against a system in which political, religious and economic forces reinforce patriarchal domination (175-76); it is in this way that *God Dies by the Nile* extends feminist criticism from the private spheres of marriage and family to the political economy of gender oppression.

God Dies by the Nile acts in a similar way to *Woman at Point Zero* and extends El Saadawi's critique. Although *Woman at Point Zero* is concerned with Firdaus's own individual experience of oppression, *God Dies by the Nile* stresses the collective effect of gender, class, religion, politics and economic exploitation on the community.

The studies reviewed highlight the main similarities and differences among Bâ, Darko, and El Saadawi. Although the ways these issues are presented and the situations in which they occur differ, all three show how systems limit women's freedom. Bâ concentrates on marriage, polygamy, tradition, and self-definition; Darko stresses poverty, class, labour exploitation, migration, and commodification; while El Saadawi focuses on sexuality, bodily control, violence, religion, political power, and class-based patriarchy. The research demonstrates that women's oppression is evident in a number of closely linked areas. Economic oppression occurs when women do not have access to financial independence, employment, property, or resources. This can be seen in Efi's situation in *The Housemaid*, in the exploitation of migrants in *Beyond the Horizon*, and in Ramatoulaye's sense of insecurity following her marital betrayal in *So Long a Letter*.

Socio-cultural encroachment takes place via strict gender norms, marriage customs, the expectations of families, and the cultural concept of what it means to be a woman. Bâ's novels demonstrate how cultural expectations can lead women to accept unequal marriages, while Darko and El Saadawi show that cultural regulation continues even when women go to new areas. Psychological and emotional encroachment happens when women absorb social expectations or suffer fear, humiliation, abandonment, and a reduced sense of self-worth; the emotional effect of polygamy on Ramatoulaye, the exploitation portrayed in Darko's fiction, and Firdaus's increasing awareness of her inferiority are examples of the psychological effects of systemic gender inequality.

Ideas spread through the means of religion, law, socialisation, education, and institutional authority. In *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile*, El Saadawi illustrates the way in which beliefs presented as natural, moral, or religious can be used to justify

male authority. The idea put forward by Gerda Lerner that patriarchy is historically constructed rather than inevitable implies that such systems can be opposed and altered (217).

Further research in the field indicates that African women's oppression should not be examined solely through the lens of Western categories. Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí maintains that gender relations in Africa must be understood in light of their particular socio-cultural settings (54). Ifi Amadiume likewise points out patriarchal family structures, economic dependence, polygamy, and socialisation as recurring ways of producing gender inequality (21). These views underpin an African feminist approach that acknowledges both common patterns and cultural differences. The novels chosen illustrate the experiences of women living in unequal systems while also revealing the assumptions that justify those systems. Chielozone Eze therefore sees African literature as capable of educating readers and promoting a critical attitude towards social inequality (23). Through their female characters, Bâ, Darko, and El Saadawi not only depict oppression but also exhibit various forms of resistance, such as education, self-awareness, economic struggle, narration, refusal, solidarity, and confrontation.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts radical feminism as its theoretical framework for analysing patriarchal structures in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*. Drawing on Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*, the framework understands patriarchy as a system of power through which male dominance is maintained across social, cultural, religious, political and economic institutions. From this perspective, women's oppression is not simply the consequence of individual misconduct but is sustained by social arrangements that legitimise unequal relationships between men and women. Consequently, the study examines both the actions of oppressive characters and the institutions that enable those actions.

Millett's account of sexual politics provides a basis for this approach because it extends the understanding of power beyond government to relationships within

families and everyday life. She explains how socialisation produces expectations of male authority and female obedience, while economic dependence and the possibility of violence reinforce women's subordination. Her argument therefore allows this study to investigate how patriarchal power operates through accepted beliefs and practices as well as through direct coercion (Millet).

This framework connects with Okachukwu Onuah Wosu's interpretation of El Saadawi's feminist writing. The author-hosted summary of his chapter, "A Feminist Perspective of Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile*," identifies a radical-feminist approach in El Saadawi's portrayal of women's oppression within patriarchal societies. It associates this oppression with social, cultural and religious conditions rather than presenting it solely as a matter of personal relationships. Wosu's reading thus supports the present study's attention to the institutional foundations of women's experiences in *God Dies by the Nile* (Wosu, "A Feminist Perspective").

A complementary position appears in Wosu's article, "Hegemony and Female Objectification: An Ideological Positioning of the Woman in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*." Here, he argues that inequality is sustained when influential groups manipulate social values and policies to preserve their interests. He also examines how language can legitimise oppression. Although this article combines feminism with postcolonial theory rather than adopting radical feminism exclusively, its attention to the relationship between ideology and domination strengthens the present framework's examination of how patriarchal authority becomes accepted and reproduced (Wosu, "Hegemony")

Applied to *God Dies by the Nile*, these arguments direct attention to the relationship between the Mayor's authority and the conditions that make the exploitation of women possible. The novel's portrayal of a peasant family's suffering brings female exploitation into contact with poverty, injustice and religious hypocrisy. Within the present framework, the Mayor is therefore examined not merely as an oppressive individual but as a figure whose actions are

enabled by a wider organisation of power. This approach also distinguishes religious belief from its manipulation by powerful characters to justify obedience and discourage resistance.

Wosu's emphasis on critical awareness further supports the study's examination of resistance. He maintains that dominated people can challenge exploitative arrangements by acquiring critical knowledge and asserting themselves. The connection with radical feminism lies in the movement from recognising oppression to challenging the structures that sustain it. On this basis, the present study reads Zakeya's resistance as a challenge to the authority that demands women's submission, rather than merely as an individual reaction to suffering. This is an application of Wosu's argument about consciousness and resistance, not a claim that his article on Achebe directly analyses Zakeya (Wosu, "Hegemony").

Radical feminism therefore provides the study's principal explanation of patriarchal power, while Wosu's criticism supplies a supporting perspective on ideology, female objectification and resistance. Together, these perspectives guide the analysis of religious manipulation, political oppression, economic dependence and gendered violence in *God Dies by the Nile*. The study consequently investigates both the structures that restrict women's autonomy and the ways female characters recognise, question and resist those restrictions.

IV. THE REPRESENTATION OF PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES IN NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S *GOD DIES BY THE NILE*

Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* presents patriarchy as a complex social system maintained through the interaction of political authority, religious manipulation, economic inequality, and gender-based violence. Set within the rural community of Kafr El-Teen, the novel reveals how oppressive structures become embedded within everyday social practices and institutions, shaping the lives of women and limiting their autonomy. Through the experiences of Zakeya and other female characters, El Saadawi demonstrates that women's suffering is not the result

of isolated acts of individual cruelty but the consequence of interconnected systems that privilege male authority and silence female voices.

The novel challenges the assumption that patriarchy operates only through direct male domination. Instead, El Saadawi exposes how patriarchal power is reproduced through institutions such as religion, politics, family structures, and social customs. These institutions create an environment where inequality appears natural and unquestionable. Women are expected to endure suffering, accept subordinate positions, and remain silent in the face of injustice. Through a womanist feminist perspective, the novel critiques these structures while advocating for social transformation, justice, and the recognition of women's dignity.

One of the most significant patriarchal structures in *God Dies by the Nile* is the manipulation of religion to justify social inequality and reinforce male authority. El Saadawi does not present religion itself as oppressive; rather, she demonstrates how religious ideas can be distorted by powerful individuals seeking to maintain control. Through figures such as the Mayor and other influential men in Kafr El-Teen, religion becomes a tool through which authority is legitimised and resistance discouraged.

The powerful men in the community present themselves as defenders of morality and religious values, yet their actions contradict the principles they claim to represent. Their public image of devotion allows them to conceal exploitation, corruption, and abuse. By exposing this contradiction, El Saadawi reveals the danger of allowing religious authority to become concentrated in the hands of individuals whose interests are driven by power rather than justice. The statement, "He spoke of God with his lips while injustice filled his hands" (18), captures the contradiction between religious appearance and oppressive behaviour. The contrast between speech and action reveals the hypocrisy of those who use sacred language to disguise injustice. Through this image, El Saadawi demonstrates that oppression becomes more powerful when it is presented as morally justified.

Religious manipulation also contributes to the reinforcement of patriarchal gender roles. Women are often encouraged to interpret obedience, patience, and sacrifice as moral obligations, while male authority is portrayed as natural and unquestionable. These selective interpretations create a social environment where women's suffering becomes normalised, and resistance is viewed as unacceptable. Through this process, religion becomes transformed from a source of spiritual guidance into a mechanism of social control. Women who question oppressive practices risk being labelled disrespectful or immoral, thereby strengthening the structures that silence them. El Saadawi reveals that patriarchal societies often maintain dominance by controlling not only women's actions but also their understanding of what is considered morally acceptable.

Another dimension of religious manipulation is its dependence on limited knowledge and restricted access to education. The villagers' inability to question authority allows powerful figures to define religious truth according to their own interests. Women are particularly affected because their restricted access to education reduces their ability to challenge distorted interpretations. The statement "They believed because they had never been taught to question" (24) illustrates how ignorance becomes a condition that allows oppression to continue. The absence of critical awareness makes individuals vulnerable to manipulation because they are unable to distinguish genuine spiritual values from political and patriarchal interests.

El Saadawi's critique does not reject spirituality but challenges interpretations of religion that deny women equality and dignity. Womanism recognises the importance of cultural and spiritual identity but rejects practices that use tradition or religion to justify domination. Through *God Dies by the Nile*, El Saadawi advocates a vision of spirituality grounded in justice, compassion, and human dignity.

Political oppression forms another major patriarchal structure in *God Dies by the Nile*. Through the authority of the Mayor and the political organisation of Kafr El-Teen, El Saadawi presents a society where power is concentrated among a privileged male elite.

Political authority becomes a mechanism for protecting personal interests rather than promoting justice and social welfare. The Mayor represents the intersection of political power and patriarchal dominance. His control over the village extends beyond administrative authority into the personal lives of ordinary people. His influence is maintained through alliances with wealthy individuals, religious figures, and other institutions, reinforcing his position. The statement “The village belonged to him, and so did the lives of its people” (61) symbolises the extent of authoritarian control. The idea of ownership suggests that the villagers are denied full humanity and treated as possessions rather than citizens with rights. Through this portrayal, El Saadawi exposes the dangers of political systems where authority exists without accountability.

Women experience political oppression more severely because they are already disadvantaged by patriarchal expectations. Their limited access to power structures prevents them from influencing decisions that affect their lives. When they suffer exploitation or injustice, they lack institutional support capable of protecting them. The absence of justice becomes one of the most damaging consequences of political oppression. Institutions that should defend vulnerable individuals instead protect those with wealth and influence. Women who experience abuse are frequently denied recognition because their social position makes their suffering appear insignificant. The suppression of dissent further strengthens political domination. Fear prevents individuals from challenging authority, creating a culture where silence becomes necessary for survival. The statement “No one dared to speak because silence had become a condition for survival” (67) reveals how authoritarian systems control individuals psychologically as well as politically. Silence becomes not a choice but a consequence of fear and vulnerability.

From a Womanist feminist perspective, El Saadawi demonstrates that women’s liberation requires political transformation. Gender equality cannot exist within systems that deny participation, justice, and accountability. The novel, therefore, calls for political structures capable of recognising women as active

participants in social development rather than passive victims of authority.

Gendered violence represents another central manifestation of patriarchy in *God Dies by the Nile*. El Saadawi portrays violence against women as a systematic practice rooted in unequal power relations rather than isolated acts of personal cruelty. Violence becomes a means through which male authority is established, maintained, and protected. The experiences of women in Kafr El-Teen reveal how patriarchal societies normalise female suffering. Women are expected to endure humiliation, exploitation, and abuse without challenging male authority. Their silence is interpreted as obedience rather than recognised as evidence of oppression.

The Mayor’s behaviour demonstrates how political and social power can enable men to exercise control over women’s bodies and lives. His authority protects him from accountability, showing how patriarchal structures create conditions where male violence becomes tolerated. The statement “His power gave him the confidence to violate what he could never create” (101) highlights the destructive relationship between authority and violence. Power without accountability becomes a weapon that enables domination and exploitation.

Beyond physical violence, El Saadawi explores emotional and psychological violence. Constant exposure to fear, humiliation, and insecurity damages women’s confidence and affects their understanding of themselves. Violence becomes a method of shaping consciousness by teaching women that resistance is dangerous. The culture of silence surrounding gender violence further strengthens patriarchy. Women often avoid speaking because they fear social rejection, shame, or retaliation. This silence protects perpetrators and allows oppressive practices to continue. The statement “Their pain remained hidden because their voices had been buried” (107) reveals how oppression operates through the suppression of female expression. When women are denied the ability to speak about their suffering, injustice becomes invisible. El Saadawi challenges cultural attitudes that normalise violence against women. She advocates relationships

based on equality, respect, and mutual dignity rather than domination and fear.

Social inequality is another important patriarchal structure explored in *God Dies by the Nile*. El Saadawi demonstrates that economic and class divisions intensify women's oppression. Poor women experience marginalisation not only because they are female but also because their social status limits their access to resources and opportunities. The village of Kafr El-Teen reflects a society divided between those who possess wealth and authority and those who struggle for survival. Women from poorer backgrounds occupy the most vulnerable positions because they experience the combined effects of gender discrimination and economic deprivation. The statement "The rich possessed the land, but the poor carried its burdens" (140) captures the unequal distribution of privilege and suffering. Those with power enjoy the benefits of society, while people experiencing poverty bear the labour and hardships necessary to sustain it. Economic inequality restricts women's access to education, employment, and independence. Without these resources, women remain dependent on others and become more vulnerable to exploitation. El Saadawi reveals that poverty is not simply a lack of money but a structure that limits freedom and reinforces inequality.

The denial of education is particularly significant because it prevents women from developing the knowledge and confidence required to challenge oppression. The statement "Poverty denied them books before life denied them dreams" (145) illustrates how social inequality destroys possibilities for self-development. Education represents hope and opportunity, while its absence reinforces dependency. From a Womanist perspective, El Saadawi demonstrates that women's liberation requires addressing both patriarchal domination and economic inequality. Gender justice cannot be achieved without social justice because poverty intensifies women's vulnerability and restricts their ability to resist oppression.

In *God Dies by the Nile*, Nawal El Saadawi presents patriarchy as a complex structure sustained through religious manipulation, political oppression, gendered

violence, and social inequality. These systems operate together to restrict women's autonomy, silence their voices, and maintain male privilege. Through the experiences of women in Kafr El-Teen, El Saadawi reveals that women's suffering is not accidental but produced by social institutions that normalise inequality. Her critique demonstrates that genuine liberation requires the transformation of cultural, political, religious, and economic structures that sustain oppression. From a womanist perspective, the novel advances a vision of society grounded in justice, equality, critical consciousness, and the recognition of women as complete human beings deserving of dignity and freedom.

V. CONCLUSION

Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* presents patriarchy as a system sustained through political authority, religious manipulation, gendered violence, and socio-economic inequality. Through the experiences of women in Kafr El-Teen, the novel reveals how social institutions reinforce male dominance and restrict women's freedom, dignity, and access to justice.

From a radical feminist perspective, the novel demonstrates that women's oppression is not merely the result of individual actions but of deeply rooted patriarchal structures. The Mayor's political power, the manipulation of religion, violence against women, and economic inequality collectively strengthen male authority and silence female voices. Nevertheless, characters such as Zakeya demonstrate women's capacity for awareness and resistance. Ultimately, El Saadawi exposes the structures that normalise women's oppression and suggests that genuine liberation requires the transformation of the political, religious, economic, and cultural systems that sustain patriarchy. *God Dies by the Nile* therefore affirms women's struggle for autonomy, dignity, justice, and freedom from patriarchal domination.

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