

Prison and Freedom in Nadia Hashimi's *A House Without Windows*

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Abstract

This research aims to analyse a prison where the characters achieve their freedom, while outside the prison they get oppressed by the men. This research uses the freedom concept by Jean-Paul Sartre because of the relevancy behind the theory and the story. The corpus of this research is Nadia Hashimi's *A House Without Windows* (2016). The study uses the existentialism theories from Jean-Paul Sartre and Representation theory by Stuart Hall to support the analysis. The result of this research shows a great contrast between the women when they were out of prison and when they were in prison. Outside the prison, they continue to experience oppression from various parties, while when they are in prison, they live more freely than when they were outside the prison. For the inmate, the definition of freedom itself shifts from the common definition. To be able to get freedom is not only in an open space, but it can also be in a prison where the space for movement is limited, but not by their actions and speech.

Keywords: *Afghanistan Muslim Woman, Oppression, Prison, Representation of Freedom.*

Introduction

Jean-Paul Sartre defines freedom as the difference between humans and other creatures on earth. Freedom is not something to be proven or talked about. It is a reality that humans have to experience. Humans with freedom can determine what kind of human beings they will become, their own objects and values for themselves, and also shape nature within themselves (Vincent Martin, 2001).

Freedom is a very interesting theme to study. We can see the theme of freedom easily anywhere, one example is the freedom of individuals to express their ideas and imagination and put them into works, one of which is a work of literature. In line with this, Teeuw stated that literary works are part of the culture, where literary works are not born from a cultural vacuum. An author who creates a literary work regardless of the culture of the society he lives in. The birth of literary works in the midst of society cannot be separated from the social and cultural influences of its time. Where the influence is reciprocal. In other words, literary works can be influenced and at the same time influence social society (1984).

Literature has a very broad scope and can be related to various aspects, one of which is philosophy. The relationship between literature and philosophy is like two sides of a coin, which are complementary and cannot be separated because literature and philosophy can

explain the problems that arise in a literary work. Philosophy and literature have the same idea, namely the reality that is presented. If philosophy departs from reality and imagine and is then conceptualized, looking for its own personality, looking for its essence, then literature starts from what is in reality and then processed through imagination, through the creative process of the writer, and then presented into something more beautiful. Imagination was in the creation and then poured into writing and also words (Sutrisno, 1995). Literature can be the raw material for philosophy and is divided into two main points. The first point is philosophy using the findings of the empirical sciences, for example, the philosophy of language which uses linguistic raw materials. The second is that people can philosophize by using the experience of the writer of literature. This is where philosophical reflection actually finds a kind of "oasis" that can be worked on. Literature is a reflection of human life which is full of various problems, while philosophy also specifically discusses the problems faced by humans in reality. One of the themes outlined in literary works through philosophy is the theme of existentialism, which has to do with human existence and freedom. The theme of freedom is the author's attention in accordance with the current reality. Authors as part of society try to reflect these conditions in the works they make.

The novel *A House Without Windows* written by Nadia Hashimi in 2016. This research will focus on 4 Afghan women who are imprisoned in a women's prison called Chil Mahtab. They are Zeba, Latifa, Nafisa, and Mezghan. Zeba is accused of killing her abusive husband, Kamal. While she is in prison, she meets other women who have their own problems. Some ran away from home because they are forced to marry someone they didn't love, others are accused of murder with unclear evidence, some have sex outside of marriage, and so on. Zeba is locked in a cell with Nafisa, Latifa, and Mezghan and then they became cellmates. Latifa who is in prison for running away from home and kidnapping her sister so as not to be with her parents, Nafisa who is in prison for having an extramarital affair, and Mezghan who is imprisoned because she refused the marriage arranged by her older sister because she was already in love with someone else named Haroon. As time goes by, Zeba has started to adapt to the prison world which is actually not too bad for her. She also began to open her heart and talk about the things why they were all in prison. And slowly Zeba opened up about her and her magic background that she learn from her mother, Gulnaz. Latifa, Nafisa, and Mezghan are interested and ask Zeba to help them to fulfill their wish. Zeba also helped them even though she was a little doubtful about the skills she had.

During their time in prison, all of the female prisoners feel the value of their existence as human beings compared to when they are outside the prison. How freedom emerges from within the women in this prison, both freedoms in words, actions, and thoughts are some aspects that the researchers find interesting to study. The prison that should be a place for inmates to be "locked up" has actually become a place to "open" the cages within the women. Prisons that should actually reduce individual freedom, function otherwise. That is the main reason why the researchers want to analyze prison as the symbol of freedom for Afghan female characters in the novel *A House Without Windows*. By using Sartre's concept of Freedom and the theory of representation by Stuart Hall, the meaning of freedom every female character gains in prison will be revealed.

Previous studies on patriarchy have been conducted in recent years. Some of the studies that have examined mostly violence is Violence Against Women in Afghan Patriarchal Setup Reflected Through Nadia Hashimi's *A House Without Windows* (2020) by



Muhammad Salman, Mohsin Hamid Butt, and Saqib Mahmood. The study analyzes women's character such as marginalization, stereotype, etc. The research has concluded that violence against women is divided into several forms such as inequality in the right to do what they want and the idea of patriarchal domination of male characters. Second, *Women's Struggle against Patriarchy: An Analysis of Radical Feminism Through Nadia Hashimi's A House Without Windows* (2019) by Naili Syiva Fauzia and Anik Chanaying Rahayu. This research aims to analyze the elements that make the female characters feel they are fighting for their rights under the patriarchal tyranny there and make themselves into radical feminism. Third, *Glimpse of Pashtunwali in Hosseini's The Kite Runner, Hashimi's A House Without Windows and Ackerman's Green on Blue* (2018) by Rashid Jahan. Pashtunwali or Afghanyat is the traditional way of life of the Pashtun tribe in Afghanistan. Pashtunwali is an unwritten code of honor adopted by Pashtun people in their daily life. Rashid Jahan provides a new dimension for readers who are not aware of the cultural code that people practice in Afghanistan and highlights the issue and social problems that Afghans are facing in their life. Not only highlighting these social problems but also tracing the root causes. Last, *The Role of the Comprador Intellectual: A Neo-Oriental Analysis of A House Without Windows* (2020) by Elna Raj. The research discusses how the author of this novel, Nadia Hashimi, as a writer whose work serves to standardize popular conventions about the East and herself occupies a position that pays attention to culture and military intervention in the Middle East. Hashimi also exposes indirectly that stereotypes about Islam emerged because of the intervention of the western nation in the Middle East countries, and the focus of this research is Afghanistan as the part of Middle East.

Regarding the claim mentioned earlier, the researcher wants to examine *A House Without Windows* by Nadia Hashimi (2016). The problems were compiled by listing the study question as follows, How are the female characters depicted in Nadia Hashimi's *A House Without Windows* and How does prison become the symbol of freedom for female characters in *A House Without Windows*.

The most important aspect of this study is how it describes how prison can be the place and also the manifestation of freedom based on every woman inmate character's experience in the novel. The first topic of the research is the characters depicted that have some relation according to the freedom that they gain in the prison. Then, in the second discussion, this research explains how the prison can be the symbol, manifestation, and birthplace of freedom.

Method

The primary source of data for this research is the novel *A House Without Windows* By Nadia Hashimi, which contains some information about prison as a place of freedom according to the dialogue and narrative events of the novel. In addition, the study consults with reliable sources like books, journal papers, and other materials on the subject as supporting evidence. The study uses qualitative research methods. According to McCusker, K., & Gunaydin, S. (2015), qualitative methods are used to answer questions about "what", "how", or "why" for a phenomenon, while quantitative methods answer the question "how much". When determining research objectives, qualitative research can be employed to help delve further into the facts relevant to a research issue. The literature study technique is the approach taken in doing a study of Nadia Hashimi's novel *A House Without Windows*.

The study employs reading strategies to thoroughly, minutely, and deeply read both the novel *A House Without Windows* and the theories associated with the text corpus that



will be investigated. Data-related tasks will be performed by marking data, which will then result in data production. The researchers use the literature research approach to produce a range of facts and relevant, accurate sources for their analysis of the book *A House Without Windows*. This method focuses the researcher's attention on reading, gathering, and observing the text.

Results and Discussion

This research focuses on 4 women imprisoned in Chil Mahtab prison, namely Zeba, Latifa, Nafisa, and Mezhgan. They all have almost the same reasons for why they are imprisoned, none other than because of the oppression of the patriarchs when they are outside the prison. The story begins with Zeba, an Afghan woman as the main character in the novel. She was brought up by Gulnaz, a woman skilled in many metaphysical sciences and a sort of "magic," as well as by her father, who mysteriously vanished while fighting the Soviet regime that was at the time invading Afghanistan. Zeba was charged with the murder of her abusive husband Kamal, who was also the father of her children. The accusations against Zeba come in the form of disparaging remarks from her neighbors as well as numerous insults and acts of violence from Kamal's family. Zeba is held captive in the Chil Mahtab Women's Prison. There, Zeba met other Afghan women who had also encountered "trivial" situations like running away from home, having sex with a man before getting married, making false allegations, etc. Latifa who is in prison for running away from home and kidnapping her sister so as not to be with her parents, Nafisa who is in prison for having an extramarital affair, and Mezhgan who is imprisoned because she refused the marriage arranged by her older sister because she was already in love with someone else named Haroon. But because Zeba was reared by a well-known female shaman, her presence at Chil Mahtab prison gradually gives these prisoners some hope. As a result, she is also capable of using some metaphysical abilities and other esoteric sciences, though not to the same extent as her mother, Gulnaz. Zeba offers a little assistance to each prisoner as needed, despite the fact that it is not much. The circumstance was altered by Zeba's presence at Chil Mahtab. The female convicts there are given hope and their long-lost freedom by her presence. In this tale, a prison that has negative connotations like being filthy, rotten, and hot, and having a room full of iron is the exact opposite. Prisons act as a bridge between the long-lost freedoms inside and the female inmates who live in the shadow of oppression. To answer the research question, this part is divided into two points such as the portrait of Afghan female characters, and the second, prison as the place of freedom.

The Portrait of Afghan Female Characters.

In this subchapter, the researchers discuss the depiction of Afghan female characters imprisoned in the Chil Mahtab prison in *A House Without Windows* by Nadia Hashimi. This analysis of the depiction of Afghan women characters aims to present a depiction of when these Afghan women were oppressed while outside prison. This description will have a subsequent impact when they are in prison. How they are different people outside and inside prison is also the author's goal in analyzing this subchapter. In this research question, the researchers divide the depiction of the characters into five, namely Zeba, Nafisa, Latifa, Mezhgan, and Bibi Shireen as female prisoners in Chil Mahtab who later will get the freedom they have longed for and which they never got when outside prison.



The first character is Zeba, she is imprisoned for the murder of Kamal, whose facts are still unclear. As time goes by, Zeba has started to adapt to the prison world which is actually not too bad for her. She also began to open her heart and talk about the things why they were all in prison. Latifa who is in prison for running away from home and kidnapping her sister so as not to be with her parents, Nafisa who is in prison for having an extramarital affair, and Mezhgan who is imprisoned because she refused the marriage arranged by her older sister because she was already in love with someone else named Haroon. And slowly Zeba opened up about her and her magic background that she learn from her mother, Gulnaz. Mezhgan is interested and asks Zeba to help her fulfil her wish. Zeba also helped her even though she was a little doubtful about the skills she had as shown.

Zeba's success with Mezhgan had set the women's prison alight with hope. A steady stream of women moved through the cell Zeba shared with the others. The guards had, at first, tried to prevent the women from congregating but they quickly gave up. The women were persistent and the guards curious. (p. 209)

In the following data above, Zeba helps Mezhgan in granting her request and unexpectedly it works. Zeba has helped Mezhgan to get out of Chil Mahtab prison and marry her girlfriend Haroon to be able to live a better life in the future. If we look at the quote in the second data above "Zeba's success with Mezhgan had set the women's prison alight with hope" there is a kind of sprinkle of freedom that is in Zeba's nature. Zeba actually has the power of "magic" which she learned from her mother, Gulnaz who is also a famous female shaman. With her power, she can do anything to help the other female prisoners there. With her helpful traits and some kind of "magic power" that she has for female inmates at Chil Mahtab prison, of course many inmates want the same thing as Mezhgan. Other female inmates came to mind like "if Mezhgan can't get out of prison, we should be able to. Come on, don't despair because Zeba will definitely help us too".

The second character is Latifa. she is one of Zeba's cellmates, along with Nafisa and Mezhgan. Latifa is 25 years old. She has been treated badly in her family environment, such as being beaten frequently and also verbally and indirectly abused. Latifa, who could no longer stand the treatment of her family, finally decided to run away from home with her younger sister. She was eventually accused of kidnapping, running away from home, and attempting prostitution. Latifa was jailed for 7 years at the Chil Mahtab prison on these charges as shown.

It was all my doing, she'd said, tapping her hand over her breastbone and nodding affirmatively. I decided to flee that miserable home. I wanted to save myself and my sister ... Now she was serving a seven-year sentence for running away from home, kidnapping, and attempted prostitution. (p. 50)

From the following data, it can be concluded that the researchers have analyzed that Latifa is a rebel. The researchers can argue like that because there is a quote from the data that can be analyzed, which is in the quote "I decided to flee that miserable home". Latifa does not want to be repressed by her family who was cruel to her and her younger sister. She does not want to continue to be in the circle of routine that only makes her constrained, she must dare to get out of the zone. She rebelled so she could live safely with her younger sister. She wants to fight to be free from the oppression she has experienced so far and achieve true freedom.



The third character is Nafisa, she is Zeba's cellmate, along with Latifa and Mezhgan. Nafisa was imprisoned at the age of 18 for having extramarital relations and held for 3 years in the Chil Mahtab women's prison. Nafisa is accused of having an indecent relationship with a man who works as a blacksmith as shown. . "She'd been accused by a relative for an improper relationship with a man, a widower who worked as a blacksmith. Specifically, they'd been seen eating together in a park one evening." (p. 48). It can be seen from the context of the following data that the law in Afghanistan is still very unfair. Nafisa, who only ate with the opposite sex, was accused of having sex outside of marriage. What is meant by the quote "improper relationship" in the data above is not about bad relationships between men and women such as pregnancy out of wedlock, elopement, and other things. But what it means is eating with someone she liked in a park in Afghanistan. Obviously this is very strange, she was imprisoned for being alone and accused of having an illicit relationship with the man. But women are still looked down upon there. Misfortune overtook her and she ended up languishing in the Chil Mahtab women's prison.

Nafisa is also a kind person to her fellow cellmates at the Chil Mahtab women's prison. Nafisa's care and kindness will never be lost, especially to her cellmates in Chil Mahtab. If one day she can be released from prison, Nafisa promised never to forget them as shown.

I would not!" Nafisa huffed, with equal conviction. "I would never turn my back on you, Latifa. And if you were a nice person, I would write to you and visit you, maybe even bring you chocolates from my shrine whenever that happens. I wouldn't want to forget you, even if you do cheat like a thief. (p. 244)

It can be seen from the data fragment above that Nafisa has a noble character. She was kind to everyone, including her cellmates who always accompanied her during her daily life in Chil Mahtab prison, this can be seen clearly in the quote "I would never turn my back on you". In the quote there is Nafisa's assertiveness about her cellmates who brought her freedom, therefore she promised not to forget them all. Jokes and laughter also accompanied Nafisa with Latifa, Mezhgan, and Zeba. She will always remember all of them.

The fourth character that the researchers will analyze is Mezhgan. She is a cellmate of Zeba, Latifa, and also Nafisa. She is the youngest among Zeba, Latifa, and also Nafisa. Mezhgan is 19 years old. She was imprisoned because she rejected the marriage that her older sister had arranged because she was already in love with someone Haroon. She is waiting for the judge's decision and her lover about the trial that they got.

Mezhgan is an optimist, despite being imprisoned in the Chil Mahtab prison. She still has hope that one day she will be released and be able to marry Haroon as shown "I'm sure Haroon is upset. I know he loves me and would do anything he could to get us both out of here. His parents must be refusing to listen to him." (p. 51). From the following data, especially in the data "I know he loves me and would do anything he could to get us both out of her" that can be concluded that even though she has been imprisoned, she is still optimistic, steadfast, and still believes that one day her lover's family will open their hearts and accept her as their future son-in-law. It is this optimistic nature that makes Chil Mahtab prison a different place from the outside world. This optimistic nature should be possessed by every woman who is in Chil Mahtab prison so that hope will continue to exist in their hearts and minds.



When Mezhgan before being imprisoned in Chil Mahtab, many operations and also the freedom she always experienced. When Mezhgan is forced to marry someone she does not love, she is imprisoned for it. A trivial thing but it really happened. This can be seen from the following data fragment.

Mezhgan was a doe-eyed nineteen-year-old, half the size of her cellmates and nowhere near as bold. When she'd refused to marry her sister's brother-in-law, her suitor's family had become indignant. Soon, they became aware that she was in love with a boy in her neighbourhood and, in retaliation, had pointed their angry fingers and had her arrested. (p. 51)

In the context of the data fragment above, it can be seen that Mezhgan who only loves Haroon but is forced by her family to marry another man that Mezhgan does not know is the reason she is imprisoned in Chil Mahtab. The freedom to love the person she loves is easily taken away by her own family. Her family also put her in prison. Her family is supposed to be a place where we feel safe and comfortable but according to Mezhgan, family is the source of the lack of freedom. According to Sartre (1992), Humans never choose to be free. Freedom is not a choice but a necessity that must be owned by every human being. Man cannot escape from the fact that he was sentenced to be free. Sartre said that "men are condemned to be free". What is meant by Sartre in the quote "men are condemned to be free" is a sentence that has the meaning that for every freedom that we do, there will be responsible behind it, in the context of the data above. Mezhgan has to take responsibility for her freedom to love Haroon. Her responsibility is that she must be in prison as a result of loving the person she likes. It's unfair to be imprisoned for loving someone else, but it happens anyway.

Women are indeed the bag of oppression carried out by the Patriarchs in conservative countries such as Afghanistan. The mindset of women who are always looked down upon by men continues to take root from the past until now. Freedom is very difficult for women to feel because of this. In the context of the novel *A House Without Windows*, the freedom that is felt is not what we feel in general, but the true freedom according to them, which is Zeba, Latifa, Nafisa, and Mezhgan as the female prisoners in Chil Mahtab is to be able to live without oppression from the ruthless patriarchal groups in Afghanistan. They can only feel this freedom when they are in the Chil Mahtab prison as if they are all destined to be united and feel that they are equal there. To be free for them is not about the place, but freedom according to them is to be able to live without oppression from other parties who want to oppress them.

Prison as the Place of freedom

In this research section, the researcher analyzes how the inmates in the Chil Mahtab prison begin to gain the freedom that has been gone and buried for a long time within them while when they are outside the prison, these female inmates are always faced with various problems and are always related to the cruelty of the men. These women are always the "scapegoats" in every problem that is out there but while in prison, more precisely when the main character in this novel, Zeba, enters there. The prison that should be a cramped, dirty, and slum place has actually become a place where freedom appears.

Freedom is a must and has been owned by every human being anywhere, anytime, and wherever. *A House Without Windows* novel brings back freedom in a different way, The



real freedom should be when you can freely go anywhere without any booths and restrictions. In fact, what the inmates in this women's prison feel is the opposite. They feel freedom is in prison. With the limited "access" of women in the outside world to be free to do what they

want because of negative stereotypes and stigmas that arise from society, this "access" can be enjoyed and applied when they are imprisoned. Being able to be more open, talk, and act about what they love is the freedom they get there. Again, a prison here became the place that become the medium between freedom and every female Afghan inmate. This is an interesting and unique thing that Nadia Hashimi displays in *A House Without Windows* novel.

In this sub-chapter of this research. The researcher will describe and analyze the freedom that female inmates get at the Chil Mahtab prison. Prison becomes the third space or a medium that connects freedom and Zeba, Latifa, Nafisa, and Mezhgan in there. In this sub-chapter, the researchers will also use Stuart Hall's representation theory and the Concept of Freedom theory by Jean-Paul Sartre. The relationship of representation with the title to be studied is to give back to the story in the novel *A House Without Windows* which is related to the concept of freedom. In addition, it will also be presented how the message is conveyed in this novel, which will then be understood how the representation of the concept of freedom in the novel *A House Without Windows* is written by the author of the work.

Latifa is a female inmate in Chil Mahtab who finds her freedom there. She also compared herself when she was outside the prison and when she was in prison and from the following data, the difference was very contrasting.

Latifa had no interest in leaving Chil Mahtab, a place where she was treated better than she'd ever been treated in her life. Had she known what prison would be like, Latifa often thought, she might have marched herself past the barbed wire fence long ago, turning herself in for some kind of impropriety. (p. 51)

The first data above discusses the opinion of Latifa regarding the Chil Mahtab prison where she will be staying in for some time in the future due to accusations of kidnapping, running away from home, and attempted prostitution brought against her. Latifa thought that it was better for her to stay in Chil Mahtab prison than out there. This data contains the essence of life which refers to freedom from Latifa's thoughts through the following quote "a place where she was treated better than she'd ever been treated in her life". The excerpt of the quote describes the emergence of elements of freedom that Latifa got while imprisoned. While imprisoned, she was treated better throughout her life and if she had known earlier she would have been happy to remain there. What Latifa felt was the freedom that every human being should have, regardless of whether it was a woman or a man. According to Sartre cited in Alviyani, freedom is an obligation that must be owned by every human being, without exception. Humans are creatures who have free will in regulating their actions and choices in life (2018) and while in prison, Latifa is such a person. She can act freely without anyone restraining her.

The form of freedom also appears and is described through the narrative presented in the novel *A House Without Windows*. There is a kind of symbolic message that means freedom is shown. "The walls were painted the same color but mostly hidden by the



scribbling of children and a few bored women. The cell doors and gates were painted an incongruous cheerful blue" (p. 81). The following data quote represents and provides a kind of hidden message about the Chil Mahtab prison. It can be seen from the quote "The cell doors and gates were painted an incongruous cheerful blue". Prison is supposed to be a "grey" place to be "blue cheerful" is an interesting thing and of course, it has something to do with prison being a place where the freedom of these women is formed. "Cheerful blue" in the context of the data above is not just an ordinary paint color, but it is a symbol of the freedom they feel in Chil Mahtab prison. This color describes a light, calm, and happy atmosphere. Very different from the picture of the real prison. The color blue is associated with the sea and the sky. The positives are knowledge, coolness, peace, masculinity, contemplation, loyalty, justice, and intellectual (Monica & Luzar, 2011).

There were so many other female prisoners that Zeba wanted to help, she was finally overwhelmed by it. It occurred to her that deep down in Zeba's heart, she wanted to help all of them as shown in "She wanted so much to help each and every one, to open the doors and set them free or promise them that their children would stay with them forever." (p. 217). In the following data, it is described that Zeba must also release the female prisoners. There is also symbolism that can be seen from the quote "to open the doors and set them free". The meaning of "doors" in the quote is the door to freedom that has been locked for a long time. With the advantages she has, she can make the "key" to the "door to freedom" that is in the prisoners of Chil Mahtab. There is also an element of freedom displayed in the data above. According to Sartre through Bertens that freedom is divided into four, which are Inner freedom, environment freedom, other people's freedom, and freedom for future generations. And the freedom in the context of the data above is other people's freedom, what is meant by the freedom of others is that we cannot feel complete freedom without thinking about the freedom of others, so we must limit our freedom for the sake of the freedom of others (2013). There is a kind of attachment that exists within Zeba until she finally has to help them. Zeba felt that if she didn't help them, she would not be able to feel absolute freedom. She wanted all women to feel equal and fair freedom with each other, because of that Zeba did not hesitate to help them all.

Zeba still cannot escape the praises she has been given after she helped other inmates deal with their problems. When she returned to Chil Mahtab from the temple of Mullah Habibullah as shown in "Everywhere the chatter is about what you've done to help us. For the first time in a long time, we feel like something can be done. You've lit this place like a full moon!" (p. 374). It can be seen from the following data that Zeba has made Chil Mahtab to be a very different place than before. There is a symbolism that can be seen from the snippet of "you've like this place like a full moon!". The prison became a very bright place like the light of the full moon at night. Calm, beautiful, charming, and also radiating happiness for those who see it and that is what the prisoners of Chil Mahtab feel after Zeba provides assistance with her advantages to them. The purpose of human life is to achieve happiness, while happiness cannot be achieved when someone does not actualize it in an action, in the form of human freedom, and has an impact on the happiness of others (Dister, 2000). That's what Zeba does to achieve happiness for himself and for others. With Zeba's actions in the form of helping each of their problems, she can also have an impact on other people who experience life's problems that are almost the same as her.

Zeba, who was able to help the other female prisoners at Chil Mahtab as much as possible, actually brought them enormous freedom. In a world where women are still underestimated, but after the arrival of Zeba, everything changes and becomes more



beautiful as shown in “They were all bits of freedom, though, in a world where most of the women did not know enough of letters to sign their names. This had been Zeba’s unwitting gift to them.” (p. 424). It can be seen from the following data fragment that the inmates who are in Chil Mahtab prison are starting to slowly gain the freedom that has been missing from them for a long time. There is also a description of how these prisoners are far from fully human, it can be seen from the quote “most of the women did not know enough of letters to sign their names” is a quote that illustrates that women are still so poorly educated that they can’t even write their own names. Freedom is not something that has been “made”, freedom is a given possibility and a value that must be won by overcoming a number of determinisms. Freedom also means that humans are needed as subjects (Busyairi & Sahlil, 1987). Zeba helps other female convicts to win their own “war” for freedom and they deserve it. Zeba as a manifestation of the long-lost freedom of the female prisoners is a gift for them. With Zeba's strengths, these convicts begin to re-open their long-held freedom.

How the Chil Mahtab prison is said to be because there is a meaning hidden in the data of these words. Chil Mahtab means the time they will stay there for at least 40 months. Zeba also came there and changed the atmosphere and condition of Chil Mahtab forever. This can be seen from the data in the form of the following dialog.

Malika Zeba, they call this place Chil Mahtab, because that’s the time we spend here. Forty moons at least. But you, you’ve lit these halls with the light of forty moons. No matter what happens, your name will be painted on the walls of this jail, in our blood if that’s what it comes down to, for as long as each of us stays here. (p. 426)

It can be seen from the following data that when Zeba came to Chil Mahtab, she changed it to be more beautiful. Chil Mahtab which means 40 months with the presence of a Zeba makes Chil Mahtab bright like the beautiful rays of 40 moons that illuminate this prison with full freedom. How other inmates thank Zeba is also reflected in the quote above. They would write Zeba's name all over the walls in Chil Mahtab and if they could, they wouldn't hesitate to write it in their blood as long as they could stay in Chil Mahtab. The aspect of freedom in the text above is very pronounced. Freedom means being completely free (not obstructed, disturbed, etc. so that you can move, speak, and act freely). To liberate means to free oneself from bonds, demands, pressures, punishments, power, and so on. While freedom is independence or in a state of freedom (Hamdi, 2006). Zeba helps to free other female convicts from various pressures within them. Zeba is the representative from freedom itself.

The existence and freedom of the character Zeba can be seen when she was still alive before being imprisoned in Chil Mahtab and after as shown in “This is not prison, Prison is out there,” said Zeba in a throaty, singsong voice. “I’m no one’s slave. I’m no one’s prisoner. God as my witness, I’m unshackled!” (p. 220). In the first fragment of the data, it can be seen that there is a statement from Zeba that she makes a kind of assertiveness in the dialogue that the real prison is the world he lives in. It can be concluded that the world that Zeba has lived in has been very cruel and so cruel he also has the assumption that Chil Mahtab prison is only a place where humans are only physically confined, but when outside the prison, Zeba remains confined to humans. Imprisoned in the physical, confined in the mind, and imprisoned from freedom. That is why Zeba thought that the real prison was life



before she was in prison. Zeba felt freer when she was in prison than when she was under the same roof as her husband, Kamal. The irony can also be seen in the data fragment above. According to Keraf, the irony is a reference that wants to say something with a meaning or purpose that is very contrary to what is in the series of words presented in a text (1985). Of many various kinds of irony, one of them that is in the data above is situational irony because the data above describes the difference between what we expect to happen and what actually happens. The contrast between the definition of freedom from prisoners and the definition of freedom that we expect is what causes the situational irony in the data above. The researchers interpret that the representation in the first data above illustrates that in our lives today, injustice and freedom are still very much felt in the life of today's pluralistic society. In the data fragment "prison is out there" it can also be represented that a life full of freedom and injustice experienced by some people is like a prison that locks them up.

How this novel is entitled *A House Without Windows* also does not escape the existence of Chil Mahtab itself. How Chil Mahtab as a prison feels more "home" than their actual home outside of prison as shown in "For a house without no windows, Chil Mahtab is not that bad. Sometimes I breathe easier than I ever did at home." (p. 425). In the ninth quote, it can be seen that freedom can be reduced. Inmates also assumed that they could already provide a "home" title to Chil Mahtab who without a window was the freedom itself. Chil Mahtab which is defined by a house can also be seen in the quote "Sometimes I breathe easier than I ever did at home". They multiply "home" differently too. How the prison is stuffy, slum, dirty, and confined is a better place than their "home" while outside the prison. They can for a moment feel relieved and breathe a little less relieved when in Chil Mahtab prison than when at home where terror and oppression always occur to them. Sartre assumes that humans have absolute freedom to determine their future because humans are not creatures whose nature or essence has been determined (Purnamasari, 2017). Zeba's act of being able to feel comfort and relief in Chil Mahtab's prison is a sign that she has freedom. With this freedom, she can determine her own essence as a human being. The researchers interpret that the representation of the nine data above illustrates and also describe that for some people in this world, there are still many people who cannot even breathe easily because there is still a lot of oppression, pressure, and injustice. To be able to live comfortably for some people is still difficult and is still happening today on this earth.

Based on the explanation above is that there is a change in the meaning of prison and freedom itself for female prisoners in Chil Mahtab. The gloomy and bad view of prison is not felt in the plot of the novel *A House Without Windows*, on the contrary, prison is a breath of fresh air for Afghan women who before being imprisoned, they could not feel true freedom. Their existence and experiences in the patriarchal society become a major contribution to how prison can be a place of freedom for them. Patriarchal society in the context of this novel certainly reduces the existence of Afghan women as long as they live. Their movements, actions, and speech are limited by patriarchal society and it is detrimental to them. But when they are in prison, the oppression carried out by the patriarchal society does not exist. For them, to be able to feel freedom, they do not have to breathe the free air of the outside world. But for them, freedom is in prison where the humans who occupy the prison are more humane than the people in patriarchal society in the outside prison. Although prison has a bad impression on many people, in the context of this novel, prison becomes a place of freedom that has been locked in every inmate woman there for a long time.



Conclusion

Based on the results of research on the analysis of the representation of freedom in the novel *A House Without Windows*, the researchers conclude that *A House Without Windows* is a novel that provides an illustration of how Afghan women can feel freedom in a confined place, namely a prison in Kabul City, the capital of Afghanistan. The novel shows that women are always oppressed, judged, and always underestimated in Afghanistan, which is still very old-fashioned and conservative about gender equality. Their range of movement is very limited. Every action, word, and deed can not be as free as women in general if outside Afghanistan. And then, the prison became a place of freedom because of the patriarchal society experience that Chil Mahtab female inmates had. When they are in the midst of a patriarchal society, their freedom is restricted even though there is no iron barrier in their environment. In the context of this novel prison is depicted in contrast to the depiction of prison as we know it. Prison should be a limited and narrow place but according to the female inmates, it becomes a wide and relieving place. They do not need to breathe the open air of the outer world to be able to feel free. However, for these inmates, freedom is found in prison, where the inmates are more humane than when they're treated by the people outside the prison. And the last one is, In the story presented in this novel, there is a distinct relationship between men and women. As told in the novel men always have higher power over women. This stereotype about women that they are inferior and unequal to men is ingrained by conservative Afghan men. Meanwhile, the relationship between women and women in this novel is just the opposite. There was no oppression and violence that they experienced, especially when they were imprisoned because in the prison, there was no man. In their thoughts, to be able to live in prison is better than live out of prison because the relationship among women slowly rebuilds the meaning of their lives. The contrast in the relationship between men and women in the novel is very visible and it is men who are the main problem of the imprisoned women of Afghanistan.

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