

**THE REPRESENTATION OF LIBERAL FEMINISM IN *A WOMAN IS NO MAN*
BY ETAF RUM**

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Abstract: This study discusses liberal feminism in 21st century in America. Liberal feminism. The representation of liberal feminism in *A Woman is No Man* explains how powerful is the feminism movement in encouraging Arab woman in Arab-American society. The representation of liberal feminism in *A Woman is No Man* is depicted through female characters's struggle in getting the equal right with men. The narratives and the dialogues of the novel construct the discourse of liberal feminism where Arab women are considered as inferior and Arab men are considered as a superior. However, the liberal feminism is showed through the main female characters' struggle to get the same equal right with men in the novel. According to this reason, Stuart Hall's representation theory and discursive approach by Michel Foucault are applied as the main tool to analyze the problems. Betty Frieddan's *Feminine Mystique* is utilized as the supporting theory to analyze the liberal feminism in the novel. The results of this study shows that the idea of Arab men is superior, Arab women are inferior become a common knowledge and general agreement among society.

Keywords: liberal feminism, representation, stuart hall, feminine mystique.

INTRODUCTION

What is a woman's life worth? This question echoes across countries and generations through Etaf Rum's intense debut novel, *A Woman Is No Man*. In 1990 Birzeit, a town in the West Bank, 17-year-old Isra prepares for some special guests: They're seeking a bride for their son Adam. Dutiful and soft-spoken, Isra has wisps of longing; she dreams of romance and adventure. But her mother warns her: "There is nothing out there for a woman but her *bayt wa dar*, her house and home. Marriage, motherhood — *that* is a woman's only worth."

Isra's parents are excited because Adam and his family now live in America, which could be their daughter's ticket out of the occupied Palestinian territories. Driven from his home by the Israeli invasion, Isra's father was reduced to a poor plot of land on the outskirts of Birzeit. Their lives there are harsh and austere.

Isra and Adam's marriage is arranged, and within a matter of weeks, she's whisked from her quiet home to the wilderness of New York City. Her dreams of love and freedom are crushed as she's shown to the space she and Adam will

share: a room in her in-laws' basement. Her mother's prophecy unfolds as Isra imagines a lifetime of domestic servitude stretching before her.

The novel shifts among character perspectives, including that of her overbearing mother-in-law, Fareeda. The older woman makes it clear that Isra's most essential duty is to produce babies specifically, male babies. When Isra gives birth to a daughter, she's stunned by both her husband's and mother-in-law's disappointment. Isra's failure to produce a male heir becomes an ongoing crisis that sucks the joy from their lives. Fareeda and her son consider girls liabilities, drains on limited family resources and sources of worry, not pride. Some of the most moving moments in the book take place when Isra looks at her young daughters and realizes with horror that they are destined to live out the same patterns of servitude and confinement that she has. Beyond the books that her sister-in-law smuggles home, Isra has little sense of hope. Her days are spent under her mother-in-law's thumb, cooking, and cleaning for Adam, a man who seems to be disinterested at best and outright dangerous at worst.

Shortly, *A Woman Is No Man* tells about the inferiority of women as compared to men, or, alternatively, describe the lives of simple people, "unimportant" in the social sense.

According to Hall, representation is the production and circulation of meaning through language (Hall, 1997: 16). As he states:

“Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other

people...Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture.”(Hall, 1997: 1)

This means that representation is an important part of the process of production and exchanged meaning of the concept in our minds through language. Language is one of media in which we make sense of things or in which meaning is produced and exchanged. In language, we use signs and symbols to represent to other people about our concepts, ideas, and feelings which are represented in a culture (Hall, 1997: 1).

There are two processes or systems of representation, first is mental representation or a set of concept and second is language (Hall, 1997: 17). Mental representation is useful to us, because it makes us know what the meaning is. However, meanings can only be shared by using language. As an example, we have the ideas of “bed bunk” on our mind and we want to share that idea to our friends. It is impossible for us to share what is on our mind without using language as the tool to explain it to other person. This is why we need language to exchange meaning.

According to this approach, we must not confuse the material world, where things and people exist, and the symbolic practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate. (Hall, 1997: 25)

This means that the meaning which is specified by the author, not only determined by the material world or the works of art, but also it is determined by man (Hall, 1997: 26). Meaning here is

produced by the practice and the work of representation. Since the process of finding meaning, we have to pay attention to the object to which the meaning is given and also the subject that gives meaning. According to Aningsih, the constructionist approach combined the relation between thing in the world, our concept in thought and language (Aningsih, 2015: 12).

There are two concepts in this constructionist approach. The first is called as semiotic, and the second is discursive formation. In this research, the researcher use the discursive formation in analyzing Etaf Rum's *A Woman Is No Man*. Rum uses the text as a media to represent his critical perspective to the social condition at that time.

“Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But since all social practices entail meaning, and meaning shape and influence what we do – our conduct- all practices have a discursive aspect.” Hall, 1997: 44)

Etaf Rum in *A Woman Is No Man* shows her critical perspective towards *A Woman Is No Man* as the impact of high immigration to the United States. Through the main character, Isra, women could relate and dream where they may not have before. Discursive formation is used to analyze the representation through the text. Therefore, by using discourse as the system of representation, this research will show the representation of liberal feminism in *A Woman Is No Man* by Etaf Rum and the author's ideology.

There are many types of feminism, they are liberal feminism, radical feminism, and marxist feminism.

Feminism is organized activity on behalf woman's rights and interest (merriam webster). Liberals hold that freedom is a fundamental value, and that the just state ensures freedom for individuals. Liberal feminism cinceives of freedom as personal autonomy- living a life one's own choosing- and political autonomy- being co-author of the conditions under which one lives. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

Liberal feminism focuses on the self fulfillment of the subject. It denotes the importance of individual and individual autonomy which are protected by guaranteed rights, economic justice and equality of opportunity. Women struggle to get the equal right with the men by getting a higher education. In *feminine mystique*, women are under pressure to believe that they could desire no greater destiny than to glory in their own feminity. They are forced to follow a certain tradition in which they need to leave school or college early, to marry at her young age, to produce families of five or six children, to nurture and to satisfy every need of their husband and children, to conform an image of sexual attractiveness promoted throughout the media.

The problem that will be discussed furthermore is the representation of liberal feminism problems which are created by the author to criticize the social condition at that time, the women's position, especially in a household. In her novel, Etaf Rum tries to show that each person should have the same rights freedom without concerning about the gender. So, they can achieve their dreams. This research has several goals of study. Firstly, describing the discourse of liberal

feminism represented in *A Woman Is No Man*. Secondly is to find out the critical position of the author.

METHOD

The data of this research are taken from *A Woman Is No Man by Etaf Rum*, some related books, journals, internets, and other resources. The main purpose of this research, by using this qualitative research, is to show the representation of liberal feminism in *A Woman Is No Man*. The researcher use the constructionist approach of representation theory to find the liberal feminism discourse represented in the novel, and to know the author's ideology.

The data processing is started from the activity of classifying and verifying data taken from *A Woman Is No Man*. The purpose of this process is to get best understanding about liberal feminism in *A Woman Is No Man* and liberal feminism in the real society. The next step is categorizing and analyzing by giving the descriptions about the conditions which are illustrated in the novel. This process' goal is to answer the first question of this research.

The next step is analyzing the discourse that is represented in the novel which concern on the subject position by using Hall's theory of representation: discursive formation related to discourse analysis. In this part, the researcher will observe liberal feminism issues based on reality, and then relate them with the liberal feminism discourse in the novel. Based on the analysis, finally, we can find out the author's ideology in the novel. We also get the information about liberal feminism in reality and in an imaginative world.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Representation of Liberal Feminism in A Woman is No Man By Etaf Rum

1. The Main Characters' Struggle

a. Arranged Marriage

A Woman is No Man tells about the discourse of liberal feminism that is depicted through the female characters' struggle to reach the equality between men and women's position. The discourse of liberal feminism is represented through the arranged marriage that the three generations of Arab women need to face as the tradition they need to take for granted. In Arab tradition, women's worth is seen through their motherhood and marriage. They are seen less valuable than men. Men are apparently to have more power than women in any aspects of life. Men decide everything in the households, while women are told to obey their men. It is a must for women to have and to do whatever their Men ask them to. The female characters in *A Woman is No Man* are shown to always obey the Arab tradition in their lives, until one day there is a female character named Deya who is finally successful to get her right to go take higher education.

1) Isra

Isra is an eighteen years old Palestinian girl who lives in Berzeit. She lives with her parents and her siblings. There is a war in Palestine at the moment. As an Arab family, Isra's family believes it is better if they let their daughters marry someone from outside the country. Until one day there is a guy named Adam who comes to visit Isra's family to purpose her to be his wife. By the coming of Adam and his family, Isra's parents feel happy

because they think Isra will get a better future when she can live abroad.

“I’ve always wanted to fall in love.”
“Fall in love? What are you saying? Did I raise a *sharmouta*?” “No . . . no . . .” Isra hesitated. “But what if the suitor and I don’t love each other?” “Love each other? What does love have to do with marriage? You think your father and I love each other?” (Rum, 2019:15)

It is depicted in the quotation above that Isra is not allowed to actually fall in love with a guy before the marriage. It is shown when Isra’s mother called her as a *sharmouta* which means a whore. Being a Palestinian girl, Isra is not allowed to date a guy. Dating a guy is counted as a sin in Arab tradition. This tradition happens in one generation to the other generations. It can be seen when Isra’s mother tell Isra about the exact same arranged marriage that she experience with Isra’s father. Based on Isra’s mother statement about arranged marriage, it is not necessary for a woman to love the man she is going to marry. The same thing happens with the man, he does not need to love the woman that he is going to purpose.

Isra wanted to ask Mama if marriage in America was like her parents’ marriage, where the man determined everything in the family and beat his wife if she displeased him. Isra had been five years old the first time she’d witnessed Yacob hit Mama. (Rum, 2019:15)

The background of the story is in Palestine. It is told in the story that Isra’s family lives in Palestine, in which at that time is full of terrors and war. The

arranged marriage that Isra’s parents has arranged for her makes Isra has a big question in her head. She is afraid whether the marriage will give her happiness and freedom or not. As she witnesses the domestic abuse that is done by her father to her mother everyday, Isra’s fear becomes stronger. She knows that in her parents’ marriage, it is the man who decides every aspect of their married life. As a child, Isra always remembers bad memories in her life. One of the bad memories is when she saw her mother being beaten by her father. Isra was still five years old when the first time she saw it. And after that, it is a common thing for her to see her mom being beaten by his father if her mother is failed in giving her father what he wants.

“You are too young to understand this now,” Mama said, “but you must always remember.” She lifted Isra’s chin. “There is nothing out there for a woman but her *bayt wa dar*, her house and home. Marriage, motherhood—*that* is a woman’s only worth.” (Rum, 2019:16)

Based on the quotation above, Isra’s mother always tells Isra that woman’s worth is seen from the marriage and motherhood. Isra clearly is not satisfied by the fact that she has to marry someone she barely knows at her young age. Isra’s struggle is depicted when she asks her mother a lot of questions about marriage and women role to get a better understanding about the role of women. Apparently, her mother always tells her that there are two things that make the women worthy, those are the marriage they have and their motherhood.

Summer again. Isra's fourth in America. In August she'd given birth to her third daughter. When the doctor declared the baby a girl, a darkness had washed over her that even the morning light through the window could not relieve. She'd named her Layla. *Night*. (Rum, 2019:128)

Isra has been living in America with her parents in law, her husband, and her two daughters for four years. She thought it would be different to live abroad. In fact, the Arab tradition of Adam's family is still strong and they do not want to be a whole American. It is seen when Isra's third daughter born, they do not feel happy about it. They expect Isra to have a baby boy. In Arab tradition, men are seen to be superior than women. It is such a shame if a family does not have a son who can give the heir to the family. All this time, she is expected to give a baby boy to the family. Isra knows she makes her parents in law and her husband dissappointed when they know she gives birth to a baby girl.

From what Friedan says we can relate it with what Isra feels during her marriage with Adam. At the beggining of her marriage, she thought that she might love Adam eventhough it is an arranged marriage. But, after she lives the married life, it turned out to be wrong. Isra does not feel the love that she expected to be happened between herself and Adam.

Friedan comments, 'It is a cliché of our own time that women spent half a century fighting for "rights" and the next half wondering whether they wanted them after all' (Friedan, 1963: 83).

Isra cannot be her trueself while being with Adam. She cannot express her thought, whether she wants it so bad. Fareeda, Adam's mother told her to give Adam a son. Because it is a pride for the family to have a male heir. But, Isra cannot fulfill it, she has three daughters. She fights for her right as a woman, she tries a lot of time to speak out. She tries to deliver her ideas to Adam and Fareeda. She wants an equal rights in the households.

The situation that Friedan describes is where the 'woman problem' has not been solved, has not gone away, but what has disappeared is a language or vocabulary capable of representing women's experience of oppression. (Madsen, 2000:44)

The struggle that Isra has been facing in her whole life represents that although she has moved to America, she is still one of Palestinian girl who has to fulfill all the eastern culture. She has to deal with the eastern culture wherever she lives. And it also represents that some women are still struggling to get the equal rights with men.

The rights of the individual are natural rights which the individual brings into the world at birth; these rights cannot be taken away because they are constitutive of the individual. (Madsen, 2000:35)

From the quotation above we know that actually we born as the same humanbeings with the same rights to live the life. It is our right to be equal.

2) Deya

Deya is Isra's first daughter. She is already 18 years old when her grandmother, Fareeda asks her to be ready to meet the guy who is going to be her husband. The arranged marriage tradition does not stop at Isra. Deya has to prepare herself to face the fact that she cannot love a guy before marriage. As Isra's mother says that it is not necessary for women to love the men in arranged marriage.

Her grandmother, Fareeda, had sewn this dress, with heavy gold embroidery around the chest and sleeves, specifically for today's occasion: there was a marriage suitor in the *sala* waiting to see Deya. (Rum, 2019:25)

From the quotation above, Fareeda, Deya's grandmother has prepared Deya to look as beautiful as she can. Because Deya is going to meet the family of a man who purposes her. Here, Fareeda's excitement is represented through the way she prepares her grand daughter's arranged marriage. In arranged marriage, in order to make the arranged marriage successful, the women's family need to show that their daughters are really special.

Deya was eighteen, not yet finished with high school, but her grandparents said there was no point prolonging her duty: marriage, children, family. (Rum, 2019:25)

Deya was only eighteen when her grandparents arranged a marriage for her. Education is not seen as an important aspect for women. Based on the barriers of women role, women are clearly not seen as worthy compared to men. It is

stated in the story that women's duty is only located in three aspects, those are; marriage, children, and family. It can be seen from the quotation above that Deya has not even graduated from high school when she is pushed to get married with someone she does not know before.

"But what if I don't want to get married?" Deya had asked. "Why does my entire life have to revolve around a man?" Fareeda had barely looked up from her coffee cup. "Because that's how you'll become a mother and have children of your own. Complain all you want, but what will you do with your life without marriage? Without a family?" (Rum, 2019:25)

The limitation of the women's role is depicted in the story when Fareeda tells Deya that women are valuable when she is married and have children. Women's work are only seen from the way she treats her children well and her role as a good wife who always obeys her husband. The moment when Deya asks about the importance of being married to a man she barely knows shows that Deya does not want take the arranged marriage for granted. She wants to know what makes the arranged marriage is important to be done.

"But I know plenty of girls who get an education first. Why can't I?" "College is out of the question. Besides, no one wants to marry a college girl." "And why not? Because men only want a fool to boss around?" Fareeda sighed deeply. "Because that's how things are. How they've always been done. You ask anyone, and they'll tell

you. Marriage is what's most important for women." (Rum, 2019:26)

From the quotation above we can see that marriage has always been the topic that is brought by one of the female character to imply that it is the most important thing to do for women to be seen as worthy. Deya is not allowed to get a higher education because men do not like it when their women have a higher degree in the households. In *A Woman is No Man*, the female characters are not allowed to get a higher education because they are only worthy when they can have a beautiful marriage. Here, even Fareeda always plants on the idea that women are less worthy than men, Deya appears to be the first female character who fights over her dream to get the higher education.

b. Education

In Arab tradition, women are not allowed to get a higher education. It is shown by the four daughters of Isra in the novel. The four of them are not allowed to attend public school because Adam is afraid that once his daughter goes to a public school, the Arab values of his daughters would be broken. Here, Adam is also frightened if his daughter will behave like an American girl. In order to maintain the reputation of the family, Deya and her sisters are prohibited to make friends with American.

"Tell me, what are you reading for?" Deya folded her arms across her chest. "To learn." "Learn what?" "Everything." Fareeda shook her head. "There are things you have to learn for yourself, things no book

will ever teach you." (Rum, 2019:54)

It is depicted from the quotation above when Fareeda asks Deya about the books she has been reading. Fareeda thinks that it is not needed for a woman to read and to learn from books. Deya never takes anything for granted. Although her grand mother always prohibits her to read and to learn from the books, she still does that to enrich her knowledge. Deya knows it is the education that can lift her up into a brighter future. She believes that education is the most important thing to do in order to pursue her dreams.

"Because marriage is what's important for girls," Fareeda snapped. "Not college. You're almost a teenager. It's time you grew up and learned this now: A woman is not a man." (Rum, 2019:75)

The statement of 'A Woman is Not A man' clearly shows that women are treated unequally with men. Women are seen to be less worthy than men. They do not the same chance with men to pursue their dreams. Education is not for women, education is only for men. From the quotation above we see that women are being underestimated.

Although Isra is afraid of her husband, as a mother she encourages herself to make Adam reconsidering his decision. As a man who has a full control over everything in the households, Adam gets angry when Isra asks him to think again about his decision. Adam believes that public school gives a bad impact to her daughters. As the leader of his family, he should direct his family into a good

direction. So, he decided to move his daughters into an Islamic school.

She thinks of Fareeda, the look on her face when Deya received her acceptance letter and scholarship from New York University. (Rum, 2019:244)

Feminism starts to appear when Deya's struggle in getting a higher education gives a good result. She is accepted in one of the famous universities in America. With the letter of acceptance she receives, she believes that it is a good sign for her to enter the next journey. Deya wants to make her Arab community realize that it is possible for Arab women to pursue their dreams. Even though, there will be some Arab women who are willing to get married at their young age, but there will always be more Arab women who refuse to get married as teenagers. It is depicted with the character of Deya, who insists to go to college first.

"I got accepted into a college in Manhattan," Deya had told her, keeping her voice steady. "I'm going." "Manhattan?" She could see fear in Fareeda's eyes. "I know you're worried about me out there, but I've navigated the city on my own every time I've visited Sarah. I promise to come home straight after class. You can trust me. You need to trust me." (Rum, 2019:244)

This repetitive sad scenes actually foreshadows the attempt of getting the freedom that all the female characters in *A Woman is No Man* want to get. It can be proven when one of the female characters, Deya has finally succeeded in breaking the rule that women should not get higher

education. She made it to the college, even though she feels sad with her mother's death.

2. Domestic Abuse

There are some stages in an arranged marriage, those are the first meeting of both of the family, the second meeting of both of the family when the guy and the family which comes to purpose the girl is interested with the girl, the third meeting to set the date when the marriage will be held, and the last is the marriage itself.

There was no shortage of Muslim Palestinian girls in Brooklyn, but Fareeda refused to marry her son to one of them. No, no, no. Everyone knew that girls raised in America blatantly disregarded their Arab upbringings. (Rum, 2019:106)

But the desperate tone in these women's voices, and the look in their eyes, was the same as the tone and the look of other women, who were sure they had no problem, even though they did have a strange feeling of desperation. (Friedman, 1953:21)

I've sat with a lot of girls—it's exhausting, really, how many my mother has found at weddings. But nothing serious ever happened with any of them." "Why not?" "There was no *naseeb*, I guess. You know the Arabic proverb, 'What's meant for you will reach you even if it's beneath two mountains, and what's not meant for you won't reach you even if it's between your two lips?'" (Rum, 2019:124)

From the quotation above Deya is in the first phase of the marriage arranged by her grandparents. Deya is being herself whenever she meets with the guy who purposes her to be her wife. The same thing she does when she meets a guy named Naseer. He asks Deya about her plan in the near future. Deya is surprised when Naseer seems okay with her plan about getting a higher education. Because all this time, she gets a bad response from the men who purpose her. Deya thinks that Naseer is probably different with the previous guys she met before. Here, Arab culture is seen when Naseer believes that his meeting with Deya is part of his naseeb. Naseeb is the destiny that is planned for every human being from God.

Deya cannot stop staring at the news she found from the old newspaper in 1997. From the news, she finally knows that her parents are not died because of the car accident. But, it is her father, Adam who killed Deya's mother. Isra is depicted as a wife who still respects Adam as his husband, eventhough Adam loves to drink booze and always come home late. It is shocking for Deya as their daughter to know that her mother's death is actually caused by her father. Deya is broken when she knows that her father is committed suicide after killing her mother by jumping off the Brooklyn Bridge. As we know in Islam, committing suicide is prohibited to be done.

Women's powerless is depicted through the way how Isra hates the character of Disney princess. Disney princess always has a happy marriage and destined to have a happy life after the marriage with a prince charming. Isra does not want her daughters think that marriage is about falling love to each

other and living the fairy tales life with a man they really love. Isra wants their daughters know that there is an Arab tradition that is called as an arranged marriage in which they are prohibited to fall in love with a guy and not necessarily to fall in love with each other.

“Shut up!” She turned from him, but he smashed her head into the headboard. Then he grabbed her by the hair and dragged her into their daughters' bedroom. “Stop, please! The girls—” “What's the matter? You don't want them to see? Maybe it's time they see what it means to be a woman.” (Rum, 2019:202)

It is such a common thing for Arab women to be treated badly by their men. As it is shown in the quotation above when Adam smashes Isra's head into the headboard and takes her into their children room. The harsh treatment from Adam to his wife shows his power as a man. He wants his children know that Men are always superior in every aspect of their lives. The one who controls their lives is man, and woman's voice is not considered as an important thing.

Women should not be just keep silent of the domestic abuse they experience. They should speak out and encourage other women to be brave. From the quotation above, it can be seen that Isra is actually afraid with the traditions that falls from one generations to other generations. In this case is the tradition of arranged marriage. Isra has been facing the internal conflicts by herself. Since she was a kid, she is told by her parents that women's position are always lower than men's position. Until she is married to Adam, the fear is now become bigger.

The abuse that she experiences with Adam and the houseworks she has to do every single day, the shame that she has to carry for having four daughters, not sons. Isra is obviously suffered from her life. She knows that the cycle will always run like that. From the grandparents, to the parents, to the grand daughters, and so on. There should be someone who breaks the pattern.

“Adam, stop! Please. I’m only thinking of our daughters.” But he didn’t stop. In one smooth movement, he shoved her against the wall and slammed his fists against her body over and over, her stomach, sides, arms, head. Isra shut her eyes, and then, when she thought it was over, Adam grabbed her by the hair and slapped her, the force of his palm knocking her to the floor. (Rum, 2019:242).

At the day when Isra takes Deya and her sisters to run away, she does not know that her mother, Isra is actually in the attempt to run away from her father, Adam. All she knows is that she brings so much things and it is packed into a big bag. All she knows that she goes to a picnic with her mother. Deya memory tells about the moment when they suddenly meet her father in a subway. She thought it was going to be a family picnic. But, the fact, Adam beat Isra until she is dead at the day he caught Isra and her daughters going to run away from him.

A Woman is No Man tells about the three generations of women all contributed to the change that came about for woman in that family. Fareeda with her diligence in getting them out of the camps. Isra with her sacrificial decisions

of defying Adam even though she knew she was going to physically suffer. Deya with her courage to stand up to Fareeda and earn her respect. This ultimately paved the way to the younger siblings of Deya who in time will have a choice to do what they want. Here, Rum is clearly supporting the liberal feminism action because at the end of the story it explains how the dream of Isra is reflected. Even though Isra is died, but her dream is depicted by the way she explains she and her four daughters would finally free. Free to choose their own destinies, to get higher education as much as they want, to get the equality that they have always been dreamed of.

The Critical Position of Etaf Rum

The aim of this subchapter is to find out the critical position of the author represented in the novel. The critical position of the authot is the third research question of this research. In order to answet it, I collect some information about Etaf Rum as the author of *A Woman is No Man*. After finding out the life background of Etaf Rum, we can connect it to the discourse of liberal feminism. There are three possible position of the author in a novel, first is suporting, the second is opposing, and the last is negotiating. To find out the critical position of Etaf Rum, I analyze it through how the main characters, Deya and Isra think about how women should be treated equally with men. Here, it can be seen from how the main female characters response towards the tradition of Arab people, which is the arrange marriage. Whether the female character takes the tradition for granted or struggling over it

to get the equal position between men and women.

CONCLUSION

The result of this research shows that the goals of the main characters in finally speaking out about woman's position it to get the same equal rights with men. The novel's setting of time is in 1990 and 2008. In 1990, Isra is depicted to struggle over her right to get an equal position with Adam. She realizes her role as a mother and a wife, but in the households she tries to speak out her ideas about something that she thinks not right. On the other side, in 2008, Deya also struggles over her right to be seen equally with men. Growing up with her grand mother, she realizes that the repetitive life pattern that her grand mother, mother, and herself should be broken. Deya represents some of Arab women that are seen halfly and do not get an equal rights.

The author of *A Woman is No Man* wants to explore the idea that women should get an equal rights with men. There are many ways to get the same equal rights with men, they are education and a good communication. Here, the feminism movement is seen when Deya finally gets the permission to go to college and pursue her dreams. She finally can break the life pattern that her grand mother and mother experience.

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