



# Woman's Struggle Among Patriarchal Domination in Drama "Mother Courage and Her Children"

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## Abstract

Mother Courage lived in the seventeenth century, when patriarchal customs still had a strong hold on society. In that century, women were still enslaved by male superiors. Mother Courage, on the other hand, is not a weak lady. Rather, as a strong, independent, and fearless leader. A superb feminine figure, which was uncommon among women at the period. In the drama Mother Courage, the feminism dominates the male role. Women's dominance may be divided into three categories: economic, social, and cultural. The research used Existentialism feminist Simone de Beauvoir (1966) encourages women to break outside the limitations and socially defined circles that make them "the other". This study used an impartial approach to its investigation is objective Approach. This study is a qualitative study that generates descriptive data.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education One phenomenon that is often found in society is single parents. Single parents are people who no longer have a spouse, be it a wife or husband, who can separate because of divorce or death. Currently, there are many roles of single parents, especially with mothers as single parents. With the role of a mother as a single parent, you must have a lot of stubbornness - between or even various difficulties in helping your life with children and families. One of them is the efforts of single parents to maintain the family economy. (Faradina & Fajrianti, 2012) Women who choose to become single mothers cannot be separated from social, economic and psychological problems. The difficulty of being a single mother has a psychological impact on the mother herself. However, with this, the role of a single parent will be more accomplished, thus creating various kinds of influences. Mothers as single parents will be more responsible, tough, and courageous in moving on with their life.

In the midst of the dominance of the patriarchal system which prioritizes the position of men in society, it will certainly be a very complicated problem for a single mother. (Novarisa, 2019) in his article related to the dominance of the patriarchal system in society. According to her, the system structure legitimized by the patriarchal system

emphasizes the privileges of men and neglects the position of women. This is implemented from various aspects of life, be it political, economic, social, or even the smallest things in the family. (Rahayu, 2017) talks more specifically about the situation of a single mother amid the dominance of the patriarchal system in her writing. Women not only have burdens in the domestic area but also have responsibility for the pressures of family life that they have to bear. The complexity of the position of single mother women in the midst of patriarchal dominance, on the one hand, experiences enormous complexity and pressure, on the other hand, the representation of women's firmness and power distorts the facts about the legitimacy of domination. Systematically, the domination structure is controlled by men, but the role of women as a single mother breaks all the justifications that women are weak. Women can stand alone without holding their hands and form arbitrary as a means of gaining self-authority, as well as showing the struggle as a tough woman.

This existentialism is very important to analyze because it is a form of aspiration to equalize the rights of women and men. (de Beauvoir, 2011) stated "for young girls, marriage is the only way to be integrated into the group, and if they are rejects, they are social waste". It means, understands the existence of women as women which is always associated with men where men dominate women and not allowed to do everything by herself will bury her dependency slowly so that he can build her life with her own rules with his freedom so that she will feel happier by achieving alone without being limited. There are several attempts to gain existence according to Beauvoir. In relation to single mothers, self-existence is a major milestone for women to become tough without depending on other people. The self-representation that can become the head of the family, the decision maker, the back of the economy, and the protection of the safety of their children is proof of their existence in a single mother.

In the drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*, there are many existentialism things that the mother courage fought for as long as she lived in war. One of the patriarchal domination of mother courage in the drama script can be seen when Mother Courage is selling his wagon to spare her son, Schweizerkas, from the death penalty, Yvette learns. The purpose of Yvette's visit this time was to purchase the Mother Courage wagon. With a very ancient Obristen, Mother Courage.

**Yvette:** "Dear Courage, we finally meet again quickly!" Whispering: "He doesn't mind." Loudly: "This is my good friend, who advises me on business matters. I happened to hear, you want to sell your wagon, because the situation is urgent. I will consider it."

**Mother Courage :** "Pawning, not selling it, just without thinking, buying back a wagon isn't easy in war."

Mother Courage lives at a time where patriarchal domination still reigns supreme. Men, in a patriarchal domination are at the center of everything, including decision-making. Mother Courage, on the other hand, is not at all enslaved by the culture. She can demonstrate her capacity to make decisions on her own, without the help of a man. Mother Courage is not enslaved by the culture. She can demonstrate her capacity to make decisions on her own, without the help of a man. As a result, Mother Courage is portrayed as a woman who is fully self-sufficient and does not rely on men. Finally, Mother Courage capable of making judgments. In reality, the Mother Courage's decision was made without any consideration for males. She takes decisions on her own, without the influence of others. She did not, however, make the decision hastily, but rather after careful

deliberation. She weighed the ramifications. Not only to herself, but also to everyone in her immediate vicinity.

Based on this example, it is very important to analyze the forms of resistance that are used to reject the existentialism that occurs in the drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Therefore, writer interested to analyze about existentialism in Drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*.

## **2. THEORY OF THE RESEARCH**

### **2.1 Feminist Approach**

Feminism is a form of women's aspiration to speak out for equal rights in various ways to have a free, independent life without dependence on men. This movement arises because in this life there are often differences in treatment of women who are considered to have no power over anything because they are considered weak both in terms of thoughts and actions. That is why the feminism movement emerged to open the views of many people about the real position of women. It means that women are able to do everything like what men do in general. Sugihastuti (2008) argues that feminism is a theory of equality between men and women in the political, economic and social fields or organized activities that fight for women's rights and interests, which means that women have the same rights as men in any field and women have the right to voice to get their rights when they feel they are not getting social equality. According to Yubahar Ilyas (1997), feminism is the awareness or injustice of the genre that befell women, both in the family and society, as well as conscious actions by women and men to change this situation. This means that women feel that there is injustice towards women, so they take an action to equalize this inequality so that there is equality between women and men.

Based on the above statement, we can conclude that feminist theory is to identify a form of women's movement to convey rights that are considered unfair and dominated by men. It is also not about resistance for men, but it is a form of women's struggle to equalize the position of women who have been considered weak and unable to do anything. Therefore, many women voiced this matter to open their views towards the domination of women.

#### **2.1.1. Existentialism feminism**

Existence encompasses not just human existence, but also the human manner of being that is distinct from self-awareness. Existentialist feminist Simone Ernestine Lucia Marie Bertnand de Beauvoir (1966) encourages women to break outside the limitations and socially defined circles that make them "the other." Turner (2012), *The other in issue* is a guy who primarily possesses the human capacity for transcendence as well as the ability to demonstrate his unique will to the rest of the world. Women are portrayed as figures by Beauvoir in his book *The Second Sex*, as beings who spend their lives gladly following in the footsteps of men, carrying out their instructions and taking their conceptions of real life for granted. Aside from that, women are split amongst themselves and are always competing for men's attention. He hasn't abandoned her belief that language and intelligence are gender-neutral for him, there is no such thing as a woman's language, and men and women should think in the same manner.

The options and possibilities that feminism provides for the greatness of femininity, according to Beauvoir, are the power and attraction of feminism. Beauvoir's idea of narcissism is based on the influence of his otherness. Tong (2016) *Women as subjects* are

constantly doomed since they are not allowed to engage in self-defining activities, and their feminine activities are unsatisfying. Women are forced to find their actuality in their immanence as human beings since they cannot satisfy themselves through their objectives and goals. Because there are no essential items that women may access in the following level, they transform themselves into important people.

Women are thus elevated to the status of being the center of their own importance. Women are captivated with, and maybe even obsessed with, their personal image: their face, body, and attire, since they believe they are objects (a notion shared by the majority of others around them). Of course, the sensation of being both subject and object at the same time is a delusion. According to Beauvoir, narcissism is initially advantageous to women in terms of building their bravery and ego. But, in the end, narcissism can stifle women's advancement. Narcissism causes women to become attached to their wants in order to suit society's tastes and conform to men's wishes. Women who have self-respect rely on the acceptance of men and society. Finally, the tragedy of all roles, according to Beauvoir, is that they are not constructed by women themselves. Women are fed to the approval of the masculine world in a productive society since they are not the ones who build themselves up.

Women, on the other hand, do not have to continue to be what males want them to be since they share no essence. It is surely not simple to ignore women's immanence, meaning the existence of limits, definitions, and roles in society, as well as the propriety that is suppressed by males. Women, on the other hand, must be able to cope with what occurs to them if they wish to cease being considered as the second sex. It is surely not simple to ignore women's immanence, meaning the existence of limits, definitions, and roles in society, as well as the propriety that is suppressed by males. Women, on the other hand, must be able to cope with what occurs to them in the environment if they wish to cease being considered as the second sex.

Women, like men, should have ideas and approaches. It is surely not simple to ignore women's immanence, meaning the existence of limits, definitions, and roles in society, as well as the propriety that is suppressed by males. Women, on the other hand, must be able to cope with what occurs to them in the environment if they wish to cease being considered as the second sex. Women, on the other hand, must be able to cope with what occurs to them in the environment if they wish to cease being considered as the second sex. Women, like men, should have ideas and approaches.

### 2.1.2 Women Struggle

The Struggle of Women According to de Beauvoir, in order to be free from the predicament of being a married woman, women must first recognize that they are oppressed, that they are "the other" in society, and that they have no life for themselves. This knowledge, whether it comes through education or simply the recognition of the circumstance that has been thrust upon them, will be the first step in their attempt to break free from their subservient position. According to Beauvoir, there are four techniques that women might use in the process of transcendence Tong (2016). Women are capable of working, work gives numerous opportunities for women, despite the fact that it is difficult; if they do not take use of them, they will lose them entirely. Women can achieve transcendence by working. They will formally acknowledge their identity as subjects, as individuals who actively shape their own fate. Women are capable of being intellectuals, Members of an organization dedicated to bringing about positive change for

women Intellectual activity is when a person thinks, sees, and defines something; it is not when a person is the subject of thinking, observing, and defining something. Women may contribute to society's socialist development, They might reject to accept their otherness by connecting with the doers' perspectives. Women must be free of their physical bodies, They may spend their time on more creative things and are more dedicated to delivering services to the public rather than focusing on their attractiveness.

By opting to pursue further education overseas, a woman recognizes that she will be apart from her family and will be responsible for her own problems. It's a problem for women because they have to prove that they can do difficult things on their own, without relying on others, which includes males. To achieve self-actualization and develop an understanding that women's decisions should be valued equally to men's, women must fight for positive things in their lives. Women's struggles are no longer only focused on combating male domination. Women have the freedom to pursue any goals they choose.

### 2.1.3 Patriachal Domination

Patriachal domination is where the position of men is considered higher than that of women so that women often experience oppression and exploitation from men. Women are considered only able to stay at home and not be able to independently do something without help from men. This is what women want to convey to get that equality that women are able to do what men do and women can live independently without men. By carrying out various movements, women will obtain this equality and be seen as having a more existence towards women so that their abilities and independence are not buried slowly. According to Radford Ruether (1996), a patriarchal society is a society where the basic principles of social arrangements, both in family life and society as a whole, are in the hands of the fathers. That means, in family life everything is regulated by men because men are the head of the household and are fully responsible for their families and the role of mothers is only as housewives and only takes care of the children and tidies the house.

Meanwhile, according to Walby (1990) patriarchy is a system where men dominate, oppress and exploit women. This means that women are only considered weak creatures so that they can only be dominated by men and women are considered unable to do things like what men generally do. In this condition, as stated by Walby in one of his patriarchal structures, the family can be analogized as a small country that maintains and conduces regulations that are detrimental to the interests of women. Manurung (2002) explains that because patriarchy is the domination or control of men over women, their bodies, sexuality, occupation, roles and status, both in the family and society and all areas of life that are anolentrism center on men and women. That means, whatever is in women and which is the right of women will all be controlled by men so that women cannot do anything without the consent of men. Therefore, women cannot do anything freely either by themselves because everything is arranged by men.

Based on the above statement, it can be concluded that patriachal domination is the control exercised by men over women so that women do not have the right to do anything without the consent of men. Women are also considered weak by men and are considered unable to do something and women can only stay silent at home. Everything is arranged by the man, both in the family and in society.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used an impartial approach to its investigation is objective Approach. The objective approach is one that concentrates on the literary work as a whole. According Sugihastuti & Suharto, (2010) This approach considers literary work as a "creature" that stands alone. It means, This viewpoint sees a literary work that may exist on its own. This method is utilized in this research to express the independence of women in Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*, as well as the roles of female and male characters in the drama.

This study is a qualitative study that generates descriptive data, or data in the form of that contain important information, explanations, and factors that reflect women's independence in Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*, as well as the roles of female and male characters in the drama. The drama manuscript *Mother Courage and Her Children* by Bertolt Brecht served as the research's data source. *Mother Courage and Her Children* is a 37-page play into 12 segments that runs from pages 541 to 578. Furthermore, internet-based data sources are employed to aid researchers in their data gathering efforts.

The data gathering methodology used in this study was reading literary works, namely Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and Her Children* and Laurence D. Steinberg's idea of independence. It is necessary to read the material several times in order for the writer to complete the analysis. Then, in Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and Her Children*, It kept track of facts on women's freedom and the roles of men and women. Data is sentences that explain the problem's emphasis, and the results are then recorded on a prepared data card.

The method of data analysis employed was descriptive qualitative analysis. Data received from data recording are recognized and sorted according to specified categories. After then, the data is analyzed by linking it to the text in which it is found. In addition, inference is performed, which entails concluding the sorted data and then creating a description in line with the research study. The researcher utilizes this to account for the validity of the data in this study by examining how far the present data can be interpreted in light of the context and Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and Her Children* was read over and over again.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The role of women and men in Bertolt Brecht's drama *Mother Courage and her Children* will be discussed, with an emphasis on the dominant position of women. Although this play is set during the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century, the female heroine is not as well-represented as women at the time.

*Mother Courage* is characterized as a fearless, determined, and self-reliant woman who rules over men. This is also one of Brecht's methods for making *Mother Courage* a peculiar character. Many literary works include female protagonists in war stories. The female characters in the majority of these literary works are shown as weak women who are victims of war's crimes.

*Mother Courage* has a stronghold in various areas, including economics, social issues, and culture. The following is a description of each dominion.

#### 1. Economic

*Mother Courage's* occupation as a merchant demonstrates that he plays a significant part in his family's economic affairs. *Mother Courage* is her family's primary earner. She

does not rely on men for financial assistance; instead, she works to support her three children. As a result, he became the family's economic leader. When it comes to males, Mutter Courage reigns supreme.

Feldprediger and Koch are two names that come to mind. For a living, they rely on Mother Courage. Feldprediger and Koch relied on Mother Courage while they were out of job and the war was still raging. Dependency on one's life

Feldprediger is a German word that means "fieldpred In Act 3, the Mother Courage begins as he is too late to flee a surprise onslaught by Catholic troops.

*Der Feldprediger : "Yeah, then I'll stop too. Indeed, if the enemy was close, it was very dangerous. Happy is the one who makes peace, his name is in war. I want a coat."*

*Mother Courage: "I don't lend you a coat, and if it's worth a life. I've had a bad experience."*

*Der Feldprediger: "But I was in great danger because of my belief."*

*Mother Courage (get it Coat) : "I did this against my knowledge. Go."*

*Der Feldprediger : "Thank you. It's kind of you, but maybe it's better if I sit here, I don't want to arouse suspicion and attract the attention of the enemy, if I am seen running."*

Feldprediger first want to flee. She would, however, be readily apprehended by Catholic soldiers because he was dressed as a priest. She pleaded with Mother Courage for a coat. Mother Courage refuses to lend her money, therefore Feldprediger is spared. Mother Courage gave her a coat and urged her to get out of the house. Feldprediger appreciates the coat loan. However, she chose not to flee for fear of being apprehended by Catholic soldiers and appearing suspicious. Feldprediger's reliance on Mother Courage began at this point. Feldprediger stayed in his wagon with Mother Courage and Katrin in later episodes.

Men are placed at the center of patriarchal civilization. Women are solely used as a supplement as a result of this. Men labor and make a livelihood in the economic field, while women stay at home and wait for presents from men. This isn't mentioned in the Mother Courage. During the war, he supported himself by trading. He takes care of his three children.

## 2. Social

When it comes to making decisions, Mother Courage reigns supreme. In this instance, Mother Courage wins the first round over Feldwebel and Werber. Feldwebel and Werber urge Eilif to enlist in the army, but Mother Courage opposes it. Mutter is urged to have courage by Werber, who challenges Eilif to a fight. Mutter Courage, on the other hand, would not let that happen. He was doing everything he could to protect Eilif from being kidnapped by Feldwebel.

*Der Feldwebel : "I saw this young man growing like a Birke tree, broad chest, strong arms: why shy away from military service, I wonder?"*

*Mother Courage fast: "It's all right, Feldwebel. My children are not for the army."*

*Der Werber : "But why not? It brings victory and fame. Wholesale boots are women's stuff." To Eilif: "Go ahead once, feel it, do you have power or a coward."*

*Mother Courage: "He's a coward." [...]*

*Mother Courage : He drew a knife. "Try this and steal him. I stab you deeper, crooks. I will give this to you guys, lead the war with this knife! We sell Linen and Schinken fabrics honestly and we are free people."*

*Der Feldwebel : "People see it on your knife, how free you guys are. You should be a bit embarrassed, throw away the knife, old woman! Before you account, you live from war, because how will you live if it's not like that, from what else? But how does war happen, if there are no soldiers?"*

*Mother Courage: "Don't have mine."*

What did Mother Courage do to demonstrate his superiority to Feldwebel and Werber? Mother Courage still has the last say on whether or not Eilif becomes a soldier. Despite having a better rating than Mother Courage, Feldwebel and Werber were behind Mother Courage. This has no bearing on Mother Courage authority over the two persons. Mutter Courage still has a strong presence. Mother Courage's became weak as a result of Feldwebel and Werber's posting, and she obeyed all of the two men's commands. Mother Courage stood up against Feldwebel and Werber in its own manner.

### 3. Cultural

In the field Men are also dominated by Mother Courage in the realm of culture. This is seen in their three children's names. Mother Courage or Mother Courage's husband decided on the names of his three children, not their biological father. As a result, the biological father of the three children's surname remains unknown. Mother Courage, in a roundabout way, criticizes patriarchal civilization. This is seen in round 1, when Feldwebel inquires about Mother Courage's identity. Mother Courage then revealed her true identity as Anna Fierling. Feldwebel then wanted to discover if his three children had the same name as Mother Courage, Fierling.

*Der Feldwebel: "Name."*

*Mother Courage : "Anna Fierling."*

*Der Feldwebel : "So, are all of them named Fierling?"*

*Mother Courage: "How can? My name is Fierling. They do not."*

*Der Feldwebel : "I thought they were all your children?"*

*Mother Courage : "Indeed, but does the name have to be the same."*

Mother Courage: "For example his name is Eilif Nojocki, why, his father always hoped, he was named Kojocki or Mojocki. A young man with a good memory, only, he was a different person, he had in mind, a French with a goat's beard. But at least he has inherited intelligence from his father."

*Mother Courage:[...] "A Swiss, but his name is Fejos, a name his father didn't give him. His father's name is very different and he used to be the head of the fort, just drunk."*

*Der Feldwebel : "How can he be named Fejos?"*



*Mother Courage: "He was named Fejos, because, when he was born, I was with a Hungarian, who was also the same, he was suffering from kidney failure, although he had never taken medicine, an honest man. The young man suggested his name."*

*Der Feldwebel : "But he wasn't his father at all?"*

*Mother Courage : "But he suggested a name. I named him Schweizerkas, why, because he's good at moving carts."*

Mother Courage's control is reflected via the names of his three children, Mother Courage against her spouses. Furthermore, it can be observed how Mother Courage defies patriarchal culture, as seen by the existence of a family name (surname) for their children.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In the intricate tapestry of societal structures, women often find themselves ensnared in the threads of patriarchal domination, grappling with the challenges posed by deeply ingrained gender norms. The struggle unfolds across multiple dimensions, encompassing the private sphere of familial expectations and the broader canvas of societal conventions. Within the confines of traditional roles, women navigate a labyrinth of prescribed behaviors and limitations, contending with the weight of historical precedents that have perpetuated a system favoring male dominance. Their aspirations, dreams, and autonomy become subjects of negotiation in a landscape where patriarchal values dictate norms, enforcing a hierarchical order that restrains the full expression of female potential. The woman's struggle amidst patriarchal domination is not merely a personal endeavor but a collective resistance against an entrenched system that denies equality and inhibits the flourishing of diverse identities.

Mother Courage lived in the seventeenth century, when patriarchal customs still had a strong hold on society. In that century, women were still enslaved by male superiors. Mother Courage, on the other hand, is not a weak lady. Rather, as a strong, independent, and fearless leader. A superb feminine figure, which was uncommon among women at the period. In the drama Mother Courage, the feminine role dominates the male role. Women's dominance may be divided into three categories: economic, social, and cultural.

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