

Resistance Against Patriarchy In The Poor Things Film by Yorgos Lanthimos

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ABSTRACT (11 PT)

Patriarchy is a social system that places men as dominant and women as subordinate, both in the private and public spheres. This research aims to analyze the forms and effects of patriarchy, and resistance toward patriarchy in Yorgos Lanthimos' film *Poor Things*. The approach used is a feminism approach with a qualitative descriptive method. This research used Sylvia Walby's theory (1991) to describe the forms of patriarchy and explain the effects of patriarchy. The researcher explained resistance to patriarchy used Simone De Beauvoir's theory (2014). The results of the research show that 1) there are two forms of patriarchy namely private patriarchy and public patriarchy. 2) There are four effects of patriarchy: gender equality, oppression of women, marginalization, and unequal decision making 3) There are three ways to resist patriarchy done by main female character: becoming economically independent, joining and involving social community, and improving the quality of education. The portrayed life of women under control in this film becomes a form of criticism against male dominance, particularly within the household. Through the representation of the patriarchal system, this film is expected to raise public awareness of gender inequality issues that still frequently occur around us.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a theory, movement and ideology that aims to achieve gender equality by rejecting discrimination and injustice against women in various aspects of life, including social, political, economic and cultural. On the other hand, patriarchy is a social system that places men as the dominant party in various aspects of life. Feminism is a response to patriarchy and seeks to dismantle the structures that support gender inequality to create a more just and inclusive society.

The common view still considers men as leaders and women as companions (Thavany et al, 2024). Sylvia Walby in *Theorizing Patriarchy* identifies six patriarchal structures: paid work, domestic production, the state, gender-based violence, relations

in sexuality, and cultural institutions. She emphasizes that patriarchy is a complex system that varies according to cultural context, creating women's diverse experiences.

Patriarchal societies shape gender identities based on physiological differences, which reinforce male dominance and disempower women (Botifar & Friantary, 2021). This domination underpins symbolic violence, a subtle form of violence that often goes unnoticed (Novarisa, 2019). However, in addition to violence that goes unnoticed, domination often takes the form of physical violence such as beatings, sexual harassment, and abuse (Mustakim, 2012).

Feminism issues are often raised in literature and movies. One movie that features feminism issues is *Poor Things* by Yorgos Lanthimos. This movie is adapted from the novel of the same name by Alasdair Gray. Patriarchy and male dominance over women are portrayed in the *Poor Things* film where the main character named Bella Baxter is always controlled by the men around her every day.

According to Bhasin (2019), men control five key aspects within a patriarchal system: women's labor, reproduction, sexuality, mobility, and access to property or economic resources. In *Poor Things*, these forms of control are illustrated through Bella's life. After committing suicide due to pressure from her husband's expectations, Bella is revived through a brain transplant and lives anew, symbolizing a rebirth of consciousness. However, even in her new life, she faces constant restrictions on her freedom, reflecting how patriarchy originates within the domestic sphere and extends into the broader social structure. The film portrays women's struggle not to surpass men, but to reclaim equality and autonomy.

This study analyzes patriarchy in *Poor Things* because the film vividly exposes its damaging effects on women, both in private and public spaces. Patriarchal domination often stems from economic dependence, domestic burdens, and sexual oppression, leading women to feel powerless in their personal and social lives. Through Bella Baxter's transformation and defiance, the film highlights the courage required for women to voice their experiences and resist systemic injustice. The researcher chose this film because patriarchy remains prevalent today, reinforcing male superiority and societal control over women. Moreover, Bella's journey from hesitation to resistance powerfully illustrates women's potential to challenge and overcome patriarchal domination.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Feminism Approach

Feminism, derived from the Latin *femina* meaning "female," is a movement that seeks equality between men and women by challenging structural barriers and empowering women to access opportunities and realize their potential (Pahlevi et al., 2020; Ardani et al., 2025). Society often places women in inferior positions, as illustrated by De Beauvoir's idea that "man thinks himself without woman, but woman does not think herself without man" (2014), where men are seen as the essential subjects and women as objects under the "male gaze." Education and socialization reinforce this inequality—men are encouraged to act freely and assert dominance, while women are taught to please and objectify themselves, limiting their ability to explore their potential. In literary studies, the feminist approach functions as a tool to analyze how social and

cultural structures shape women's representation and gender norms in literature, fostering critical awareness and challenging patriarchal perspectives (DeVito, 2018; Larasati, 2024).

b. Patriarchy Theory

Patriarchy comes from the Greek word patriarches, which means "paternal power". Originally, the term referred to a family system in which men (fathers or heads of households) had complete control over their family members, including women, children and slaves (Halizah et al, 2023). Sistem ini berasal dari budaya, tradisi, dan agama yang meminggirkan perempuan dalam hal hak, status, dan kesempatan (Qorry et al., 2025). Patriarchy is a social system dominated by men in all aspects of daily life. In addition, patriarchy causes gender inequality between men and women. Women are disadvantaged in a patriarchal system because their roles are limited.

One thinker who provides a definition of Patriarchy is Silvia Walby. She said in her book "patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby, 1991). Walby then divides patriarchy into six structures based on what happens: the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions. Each of these structures has an effect on women.

The patriarchal mode of production is a relationship of domestic work that women do by receiving a living as their wage. In addition, they also do not work outside the home. This means that there is an economic dependency for women on men, where men can focus on their work outside the home while being dominant in the home (Walby, 1991). The second structure is patriarchal relations in paid work. Women often experience inequality and discrimination in performing tasks in the world of work. This is why they often receive salaries that do not match what they do.

Patriarchal relations in the state is that political institutions often defend male interests through laws, policies and resource distribution. The minimal representation of women in government institutions also shows how the state reproduces patriarchal domination (Walby, 1991). The fourth structure relates to gender-based violence, such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape, being social control mechanisms used to subjugate women. This violence is often not taken seriously by the legal system.

Patriarchal relations in sexuality are constructed within a framework that favors men. Heterosexual norms and control over women's bodies (including standards of beauty and sexual morality) are forms of patriarchal domination that limit women's agency over their own bodies (Walby, 1991). The last structure is patriarchy's relationship with religion and culture. Media, religion, and educational institutions shape narratives and representations that normalize women's subordination. Images of women are often stereotypically constructed-as passive, emotional, and dependent-which reinforce patriarchal structures in the collective consciousness of society.

c. Forms of Patriarchy

Based on those six patriarchal structures, Walby also distinguished patriarchy into two forms.

Forms of patriarchy	Private	Public
Dominant structure	Household production	Employment/stage
Wider patriarchal structure	Employment	Household production
	State	Sexuality
	Sexuality	Violence
	Violence	Culture
	Culture	
Period	19 th century	20 th century
Mode of expropriation	Individual	Collective
Patriarchal strategy	Exclusionary	Segregationist

1) Private Patriarchy

Private patriarchy refers to a form of patriarchy in which male domination of women occurs within the domestic sphere and is personal and direct. In private patriarchy, the appropriation of women's labor occurs primarily by individual within the household (Walby, 1991). The family acts as the dominant structure, in which men (such as husbands or fathers) control women through the family structure, primarily by isolating women from public life (exclusionary) and relying on them for unpaid domestic work. The family is considered a pillar of stability and fundamental to the social order, regardless of what is liked or disliked. The family is a sphere that determines gender inequality, namely the extent to which women's labor production and structure are deprived within the household. Production here refers not only to housework, but also to reproduction and raising children.

The impact of private patriarchy is also evident in the spheres of employment and the state. In the 19th century, women were generally barred from accessing decent paid work, or if permitted, were only placed in low-paid informal jobs. The state reinforced this pattern by enacting laws and policies that restricted women's rights, such as prohibiting property ownership after marriage or limiting access to higher education. These mechanisms ensured male dominance by restricting women's access to economic and political resources.

Furthermore, private patriarchy operates through the regulation of sexuality, violence, and culture. Women's sexuality is controlled through moral norms that emphasize purity, fidelity, and obedience to husbands, while domestic violence is considered a private matter in which men have the right to discipline women. Culture reinforces this condition by reproducing the ideal image of women as obedient wives and housewives, who are considered pillars of social stability.

2) Public Patriarchy

Public patriarchy describes a form of patriarchy that works through social institutions (such as the labor market, state, and culture) that subordinate women collectively and systemically. In this context, women are no longer isolated, but still experience subordination through structural mechanisms, such as employment discrimination, political under-representation, or adverse cultural representation. For example, in paid employment, there has been a shift from an exclusionary strategy to a segregative strategy, that is, a movement from efforts to exclude women from paid employment to accepting their presence but limiting them to segregated jobs that are lower in status than men's jobs.

On the other hand, women's sexuality is also controlled through social norms, stigma, and institutional expectations of femininity and motherhood, which reinforce their dependence. Furthermore, public patriarchy operates through violence, culture, and the state. Violence against women serves as a mechanism of control that limits their freedom, while cultural institutions reproduce gender stereotypes that portray women as passive or dependent. The state also often fails to provide equal political representation, even through policies that reinforce inequality.

d. The Effects of Patriarchy

According to Walby (1991), there are several aspects that patriarchy inflicts on women:

1) Gender Equality

Patriarchy creates gender inequality and places men at an advantage and women at a disadvantage. In fact, in the capitalist system, labor is divided based on gender. This is due to the exclusivity of patriarchy; rather than excluding women, employers recruit women as workers and separate women's tasks from men's. For example, women are more needed in the industrial sector and other labor sectors because women are cheaper to hire at the same skill level, which is caused by patriarchal practices that suppress women's wages.

Gender inequality does not only occur in the workplace. In the private sphere of patriarchy, domestic responsibilities such as childcare, eldercare, and housework are disproportionately assigned to women, thereby reinforcing their economic dependence and limiting their opportunities for career development. Even when women participate in paid work, patriarchal norms continue to place them as primary caregivers, perpetuating the "double burden" of productive and reproductive work. This practice demonstrates how private patriarchy operates within households to limit women's autonomy and maintain male dominance.

In the sphere of public patriarchy, structural inequality is evident through institutional barriers and cultural norms that limit women's access to power and resources. Women are underrepresented in political leadership, rarely occupy decision-making positions in large companies, and often experience gender-based violence in public spaces, all of which reinforce their subordination. For example, despite legal reforms, women continue to face barriers to entering professions such as law, medicine, or engineering at the same level as men, due to cultural stereotypes and institutionalized discrimination.

2) Oppression Women

Patriarchy is related to violence against women, including sexual violence, domestic violence, and other forms of gender oppression. As an example of the transition from private patriarchy to public patriarchy in British history, violence against wives by husbands was excused as a legitimate punishment as the rod as the stick was no thicker than a man's thumb. Cultural institutions, such as the church, supported the idea that a woman's place was in the home.

The dominant belief system justifies these actions as necessary and good within its own framework. For example, the practice of clitoridectomy or cutting of the clitoris is carried out to make a young woman suitable for marriage. The dominant belief system justifies these actions as necessary and good within its own framework. For example, the practice of clitoridectomy or clitoral cutting is performed to make a young woman marriageable, and this is supported materially. Religion is usually the dominant belief system that legitimizes these practices. However, modern medicine, as a contemporary authoritative belief system that justifies female mutilation, has a similar place in its scheme.

3) Marginalization

Patriarchy influences stereotypical gender roles and limits choices for individuals who do not conform to those roles. The key to patriarchal relationships in culture lies in the difference between the discourses of femininity and masculinity, as well as the masculine perspective on femininity. The opposing ideas of femininity and masculinity are shaped by society from an early age. Masculinity implies assertiveness, activity, agility, and quick initiative. Meanwhile, femininity implies cooperation, passivity, gentleness, and emotionality. For example, boys and girls are distinguished by the colors pink and blue on their belongings. They are also distinguished by the toys they play with; boys are given train sets and Legos, while girls are given dolls. This distinction also occurs in education, where boys tend to take science and crafts classes, while girls take art and home economics classes. In this way, they are prepared for their roles as adults in the division of labor based on gender.

The discourse of femininity defines women as part of the family, whether married or unmarried. Although marriage is the main goal, the ideal example of middle-class femininity is willingness to sacrifice, weakness, and dependence on a husband or father. Consequently, women do not work outside the home to earn a living. Meanwhile, masculinity involves an orientation towards the outside world, beyond the family sphere. For example, wives who are financially dependent on their husbands are central to the discourse of masculinity.

4) Unequal Decision Making

Men are more likely to occupy leadership positions and make important decisions. However, this creates an imbalance in decision-making, as women's voices and interests are often marginalized. In *Theorizing Patriarchy*, Sylvia Walby explains that male dominance in both the public and private spheres produces unequal structures of decision-making. For instance, within the household,

major decisions such as financial management, residence, or children's education are often determined by men, while women are positioned merely as supporters. Similarly, in the public sphere, including politics and the workplace, strategic decision-making roles are largely dominated by men, resulting in policies that frequently fail to reflect women's needs and experiences. For example, in politics, issues such as maternity leave or childcare services are rarely prioritized, since most policymakers are men who do not directly experience these concerns. Therefore, this imbalance reinforces patriarchal patterns in which men monopolize authority, while women's capacity to shape collective life remains restricted.

e. The Ways to Resist Patriarchy

Resistance to patriarchy consists of various ways that are not just through economic channels. Strategies against patriarchy according to Simone De Beauvoir (2014) and Walby (1991) include:

1) Becoming Economically Independent

Women's economic independence represents a crucial form of resistance against patriarchy. Through access to paid work, women sought to free themselves from financial dependence on husbands or male relatives. However, women's entry into the labor market has never been neutral. Patriarchal structures imposed barriers that ensured that, even when women worked, they remained in a subordinate position. Walby argues that economic independence is not only a matter of individual income but also a structural issue, shaped by the interaction between patriarchy and capitalism in sustaining male dominance in the workplace.

Walby distinguishes between two main patriarchal strategies in the labor market: exclusion and segregation. Exclusion refers to the prevention of women's entry into paid work altogether, for example through marriage bars that required women to resign upon marriage, or prohibitions against women's participation in apprenticeships, which served as gateways into skilled professions. Once women were eventually admitted to the labor market, patriarchy shifted toward segregation allowing women to enter, but confining them to low-status, low-paid, or part-time positions. In this way, women appeared to gain economic independence, but their opportunities and conditions remained systematically inferior. A historical example of resistance to exclusion can be seen in the struggle of nineteenth-century women in England to enter the medical profession. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, for instance, had to overcome enormous barriers before eventually becoming the first woman doctor in England.

2) Joining and Involving Social Community

Woman who achieves masculine independence has the great privilege of having sexual relations with autonomous and active individuals who generally will not play a parasitic role in her life, who will not tie her down with their weaknesses and the demands of their needs (Simone De Beauvoir, 2014). Based on those opinion,

independent women can be a threat to men if they can do the same things that men often do so far.

Women's resistance to patriarchal structures often takes collective rather than individual forms, particularly through participation in social communities and organizations. Feminist movements created alternative spaces where women could raise demands for political rights, including access to higher education, voting rights, and entry into professions previously dominated by men. For example, feminist campaigns in the UK played an important role in forcing universities to accept women and pressuring the state to expand voting rights for women in the early 20th century.

Walby further emphasizes the role of women in labor unions as an arena for collective struggle. Through organizing together, women workers sought to eliminate marriage bans, oppose discriminatory practices such as hiring and firing based on seniority, and challenge the inequality in wages between men and women. Historical examples include women in the textile sector, who organized in labor unions to place gender inequality squarely on the labor political agenda, thereby transforming class-based struggles into simultaneous critiques of patriarchy.

Beyond the spheres of politics and paid employment, Walby highlights the emergence of women's organizations aimed at confronting male violence. The establishment of women's refuges in Britain exemplifies this development: these institutions not only provided material protection and support for survivors of domestic violence but also constituted a collective denunciation of cultural norms that legitimized male domination.

3) Improving the Quality of Education

Access to higher education was one of the few campaigns of first-wave feminism that occasionally gained significant attention. In this struggle, women succeeded in winning the right to study at a number of universities, although the opportunities were initially very limited both in terms of the number of institutions and the types of universities that opened their doors to them. The importance of this right was not merely individual—allowing women to acquire knowledge, skills, and intellectual independence—but also structural, as it granted them entry into professions that had previously been almost entirely monopolized by men. Professions such as medicine, law, and academia required university-level qualifications as essential prerequisites. Therefore, women's access to universities directly became a gateway for challenging patriarchal exclusion in the sphere of professional employment.

Walby (1991) explains that restrictions on women's access to education constituted part of patriarchy's exclusionary strategy, in which women were not only denied entry into the public sphere but were also relegated to domestic roles. Even when women were eventually admitted into universities, this was often accompanied by a segregation of fields of study; for example, women were encouraged to pursue subjects deemed "appropriate to their nature," such as literature, the arts, or teaching, while disciplines such as medicine, engineering, and law remained male-dominated. A frequently cited case is the struggle of women in nineteenth-century England to enter medical schools, exemplified by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, who faced

substantial barriers before eventually becoming the first female physician in England. This case illustrates how the struggle for access to higher education was not only about the right to study, but also about gaining entry into broader structures of employment and professional power.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher used qualitative descriptive method of research that was relevant to this research. Qualitative research tended to be used in analyzing written data. Qualitative research referred to: concepts of meaning, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and other things related to description (Firmansyah et al., 2021). The research method combined descriptive and qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research method with a literature study approach allows walby to detail and describe various aspects of the strategy using existing data in relevant literature (Saksitha et al., 2024). The source of data was the primary data that was directly related to the thesis discussion. In this research, the researcher obtained the data from the script and the dialogues of the film *Poor Things* (2023).

1. Data Collection

Documentation involves collecting data from documents, archives, or other written materials related to the research phenomenon and the documents used can be records, reports, letters, books, or other official documents (Nafisatur, 2024). For data collection techniques, researcher used documentation techniques, and in this research the researcher applied descriptive qualitative methods to describe patriarchy in the movie *Poor Things*. In this research, the researcher employed a documentation approach because it only focused on films and reading materials. Therefore, this research was included in the documentation technique.

In this research, the researcher used the documentation technique to collect data. Based on the explanation above, documentation could be in the form of text, images, symbols, or literary works. The researcher collected data from one of the literary works, the film *Poor Things*, which was also considered part of the document. The researcher collected the data by watching the movie and reading the script. The researcher took several steps in collecting the data, including:

- 1) Watching the Movie
- 2) Reading the Script of *Poor Things*
- 3) Marking the Dialog
- 4) Identifying and Classifying

2. Data Analysis Strategies

The data analysis technique used in this research aimed to process data to answer the formulation of the research that have been determined. According to Miles and Huberman (1984) there were three activities in descriptive qualitative research to analyze data. Data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification were examples of these activities. The researcher divided the activity of data analysis

into three parts: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The researcher used the following steps to analyze the data from this research:

1) Data Reduction

The researcher only used particular data that are accurate and needed for analyzing the problem of this research.

2) Data Display

In this step, the data were being organized in order to gather the result, then the conclusion drawn based on the data being analyzed. The better the data, the more valid the result was.

3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification

Conclusion was a step where the data that had been gathered were concluded regarding the result found in this research. In drawing a conclusion, the result of the research had to be valid in order to give a clear explanation. The clarification of the result that needed to be concluded had to be accountable.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a) Results

In this research, the researcher found twenty relevant data points that were analyzed using the theoretical framework and methodology described in chapter two. The analysis revealed the first research question, there two forms of patriarchy according to Sylvia Walby's (1991) theory: seven data points were found in private patriarchy, and one data point in public patriarchy. Additionally, in addressing the second research question, the researcher found four effects of patriarchy according to Sylvia Walby (1991) theory: gender equality (two datum), oppression of women (three datum), marginalization (two datum), and unequal decision making (one data). Furthermore, in addressing the third research question, the researcher found three ways to resist patriarchy according to Simone de Beauvoir's (2014) theory: becoming economically independent (one data), joining and involving social community (one data), and improving the quality of education (two datum).

b) Discussion

The analysis aims to explain the forms and effects of patriarchy experienced by Bella and relate them to relevant theories. In analyzing the dialogue, actions, and symbolism of the main characters, this research aims to explain how the main female characters resist the patriarchy represented in the *Poor Things* film.

1) The Forms of Patriarchy in the *Poor Things* film by Yorgos Lanthimos

a. Private Patriarchy

Private patriarchy occurs in individual households dominated by husbands or fathers. On the other hand, in a personal patriarchy system, the exploitation of women is maintained in the household by not allowing them to enter the public sphere.

1. Forbidden Leaving the House (00:15:00–00:15:36)

Bella: God. Sun. Outside must go.

Godwin Baxter: Outside? No Bella. We work. Cut fingers?

Bella: Then Candles take me. Candles!!

Max: Of course I can if-

Godwin Baxter: No.

Bella: Out. Yes!

Max: Has she ever been outside?

Bella: No!

Godwin Baxter: I have created a perfectly entertaining and safe world for Bella.

Based on the dialogue between Godwin Baxter, Bella, and Max in the operating room, the scene shows how Godwin Baxter creates a world that he considers safe and comfortable for Bella, under the excuse of protecting her from outside dangers. However, behind this excuse lies hidden control that reflects a form of private patriarchy. Godwin purposely limits Bella's mobility, even for simple outdoor walks, to keep her within an environment he can fully control. His primary goal is not only about protect her, but more about keeping the secrets of the scientific experiments he has conducted on Bella's body and mind from being revealed to the public. This action shows how male power can be wrapped in a narrative of protection, yet is actually used to maintain control and hide personal interests.

2. Controlling Sexual Desire (01:11:06–01:12:00)

Duncan: It must not be eaten dainty flake by dainty flake but inhaled with gusto, like life itself.

Bella: It incredible. What is... Who made this?... We need more.

Duncan: No more. One is enough, any more it is too much. It's siesta time.

Bella: What is siesta?

The scene where they have lunch together shows how Duncan controls Bella through sexuality. When Bella wants another slice of tart, Duncan forbids her from having another slice and says the Spanish idiom, "It's siesta time," which literally means nap time, but in this context is meant as an invitation to have sex. However, Bella has not fully agreed to this. Through this statement, Duncan not only hides his sexual intentions but also attempts to direct Bella's behavior according to his desires, without giving her space for choice or full consent. This represents a form of hidden domination that places male desires above female autonomy, characteristic of private patriarchal practices.

3. Knowledge Consider a Threat (01:11:06-01:12:00)

Duncan: Bella, let us take the air, 'in our cabin'?

Bella: These two are fighting and ideas are banging around Bella's head and heart like lights in a storm.

Duncan: You are always reading now Bella. You are losing some of your adorable way of speaking.

Bella: I am a changable feast, as are all of we. Apparently according to Emerson, disagreed with by Harry.

Duncan: Come. Come. Just come.

Bella: You are in my sun.

Duncan: What?

When Bella is in a discussion with her two friends on the deck of the ship, Duncan suddenly comes and asks her to return to his cabin for sex. Bella refuses his request with a rational explanation, which shows the development of her increasingly critical thinking. This logical refusal upsets Duncan, because he is used to Bella being innocent, naive, and always obeying his wishes. This change is perceived as a threat by Duncan, who then expresses his anger by throwing away the book Bella was reading. When Bella receives another book from her friend Martha, he also throws it into the sea. This action reflects a form of private patriarchy, where male dominance is not only manifested through control over women's bodies but also through restrictions on access to knowledge and intellectual freedom. Women who think critically are seen as dangerous because they can challenge male authority in personal relationships.

4. Dictating How Women should Behave (00:50:13-00:50:38)

Duncan: You're behavior is unconscionable. Will you behave?

Bella: The food was cacking my throat, the baby annoying, and the woman boring with words.

Duncan: You will rejoin the table and will confine yourself to the following three phrases. 'How marvellous'. 'Delighted'. 'And how do they get the pastry so crisp?' Yes?

Bella: You are hurting Bella.

When Duncan and Bella move away from the dining table, it is a form of control over Bella's speech and manner, reflecting patriarchal values in which women must be submissive, polite, and pleasant in public. This shows that Duncan not only wants to control Bella socially, but also physically and psychologically. He considers himself entitled to dictate how Bella should behave in social settings to maintain the "politeness" he judges based on patriarchal standards.

Bella responds by saying, "You are hurting Bella," which indirectly confirms that what Duncan is doing is not just a reprimand, but a form of physical violence. This shows that even in private relationships, women are still vulnerable to violence and control from men, especially when they do not comply with the norms or expectations established by the patriarchal system. Duncan's behavior reflects how male power can operate subtly yet effectively in private spaces, under the guise of "maintaining behavior" or "educating one's partner." However, at its core, such actions constitute a form of restraint on women's autonomy to express themselves and act freely.

5. Sexual Desire That Must Be Eliminate (02:09:21-02:11:12)

Bella: I wish to now go see my near dead God.

Alfie: Adorable idea. Unfortunately my darling my life is dedicated to the taking of territory. You are mine and that is the long and short of it.

Bella: I am not territory.

Alfie: The root of the problem is between your legs and I will have it off and it will not distract and divert you anymore. A man spends his life wrangling his sexual compulsions, it's a curse, and yet in some ways his life's work. A woman's life's work is children, I intend to rid you of that infernal packet between your legs and plant a seed straight after.

The scene at 02:09:21–02:11:12 shows an extreme form of private patriarchy through the actions of Alfie Blessington, Bella's husband. Knowing that Bella—who suffers from amnesia—was once a sex worker in Paris, Alfie decides to control her sexual desires through violence, planning to remove part of Bella's vagina. This action shows a brutal attempt to control women's bodies and sexuality through surgery. Although Bella tries to explain her psychological condition and identity, Alfie responds with violence, pointing a gun at her and forcing her to take a sedative so that the procedure can be carried out immediately. This scene reflects how patriarchy system not only regulates women's roles and behavior but also seeks to literally control their bodies to serve men's needs.

b. Public Patriarchy

Public patriarchy is a form of domination that allows women to access the public sphere, such as the world of work, politics, and education, but still places them in subordinate positions. Although women are not formally excluded from any structure or level, they continue to face exploitation, discrimination, and marginalization at all levels. In this system, women's participation in the public sphere is often only symbolic or limited by patriarchal norms and values that continue to prioritize men's roles as the center of power.

6. Women's Rights Are Ignore in the Workplace (01:35:32-01:37:14)

Swiney: My grandchild. Sick and poorly and requiring much doctoring. My choice of giving you choice will jeopardise the business, her health, her life. Do you want that Bella?

Bella: Of course not-

Swiney: You don't? You are so lovely.

Bella: I thought you were going for my lobes.

Swiney: We must work. We must make money. But more than that Bella, we must experience everything. Not just the good, but degradation, horror, sadness. This makes us whole Bella, makes us people of substance. Not flighty, untouched children. Then we can know the world. And when we know the world, the world is ours.

Bella: I want that.

Swiney: Now go and fuck someone and bring me ten francs.

The debate between Bella, Swiney, and Toinette shows how public patriarchy limits women's autonomy even in the workplace. Bella asks whether sex workers can choose the men they want to serve, but Swiney rejects this on the grounds of business interests and personal needs, such as her grandchild's medical expenses. This refusal reflects how women's bodily autonomy remains controlled by economic structures and power dynamics, even when enforced by other women. Bella, who opposes the system, chooses to give in out of sympathy for Swiney's grandchild's condition. The public patriarchy in this scene shows that women's subordination is not only enforced but also normalized.

2) The Effects of Patriarchy to Main Female Character in The *Poor Things* Film by Yorgos Lanthimos

1. Gender Equality

Patriarchy system creates gender inequality by placing men in dominant positions and women in subordinate positions. This system provides social, economic, and political advantages to men, while women are often limited in their roles, both in the public and domestic spheres.

7. Sex Without Commitment (00:44:08-00:44:20)

Duncan: You will be advised, if it's not too late, not to fall in love with me. I have very little to offer in the way of constancy, just adventure.

Bella: I see.

Based on the dialogue above, Duncan's character is portrayed as a representation of men in a patriarchal system who only care about their own satisfaction. He desires a sexual relationship with Bella without commitment or emotional responsibility. When Bella wants mutuality, Duncan rejects her on the grounds of exhaustion, then tells Bella not to fall in love with him. This mindset reflects the imbalance in relationships within the patriarchal structure, where men hold complete power over women's bodies and emotions. The effects of this gender inequality position women like Bella as objects meant to serve men's needs, but they are not given equal space to express their own desires, needs, or rights. This shows that patriarchy system is not about controls women's bodies but also limits their emotional freedom in personal relationships.

2. Oppression of Women

Oppression of women in a patriarchal system refers to the forms of oppression experienced by women as a result of social structures that place men as the dominant party in almost all aspects of life.

8. Psychological Threats (02:05:41-02:06:07)

Alfie: I will have to shoot you in the fucking head if you try to leave darling.

Bella: The front or the back of the head?

Alfie: The back as to be sure you were leaving and I was not being rash. I have missed you.

Bella: So I am a prisoner?

Alfie: This conversation has gone down an unfortunate route. I am sure you will be as happy as you were before.

In this scene, Alfie shows his oppressive nature by threatening to shoot Bella in the back of the head if she tries to leave the house during her memory recovery period. The threat is not just empty words, Alfie emphasizes his seriousness by pointing a gun at his servant for a simple mistake in serving pheasant. This act signifies that he uses violence, both verbal and symbolic, to maintain his power. Bella's emotional reaction is frozen with tearful eyes, reflecting the mental pressure she faces due to the threat. This scene illustrates how patriarchal power not only subjugates women physically but also restricts their freedom through fear, manipulation, and emotional intimidation.

3. Marginalization

Marginalization is a systematic process that places women and individuals who do not conform to traditional gender roles in subordinate positions. This process not only limits their access to power and resources, but also inhibits their overall social participation.

9. Gender Stereotypes and Traditional Roles (02:09:34-02:10:14)

Alfie: The root of the problem is between your legs and I will have it off and it will not distract and divert you anymore. A man spends his life wrangling his sexual compulsions, it's a curse, and yet in some ways his life's work. A woman's life's work is children, I intend to rid you of that infernal packet between your legs and plant a seed straight after.

Based on Alfie and Bella's dialogue, it seems obvious how the patriarchal system works by degrading and marginalizing women. Alfie describes women's bodies as a problem that must be eliminated, then states that the purpose of women's lives is only to have children. Meanwhile, male sexual desire is considered a 'curse', but is still seen as important for his life. This statement reflects the view that men are free to determine their own lives, while women are judged strictly by their bodies' ability to give birth. This reinforces the stereotype that men are the controllers, and women must be controlled. Overall, this reflects how women lose control over their bodies and lives in an unequal system.

4. Unequal Decision Making

One of the obvious effects of patriarchy system is inequality in decision-making. Men more often occupy leadership positions and have the power to make important decisions, both in public and private spheres.

10. No Right to Participate in Decision-Making (00:28:56-00:31:24)

Godwin Baxter: I see love between you and Bella.

Max: I... what? I... she is...

Godwin Baxter: Perhaps you should marry her?

In this scene, Godwin Baxter is shown holding the decision about Bella's life. In a conversation between Godwin and Max, Godwin suggests that Max marry Bella. However, both mentally and emotionally, Bella is still not mature, though her desires for sex are beginning to intensify due to her brain entering the teenage phase. Besides Godwin's opinion that Bella seems to like Max, it turns out Max also has feelings for Bella. When Max proposes marriage to Bella, her response is only "let's touch each other's genitals" instead of a simple "yes or no." This indicates that Bella was still curious about what sex was. However, Godwin did not pay much attention to this, and he immediately set conditions for Max: if he marries Bella, he must always live in Godwin's house. Then, Godwin made a marriage agreement between Bella and Max with a marriage lawyer without asking for Bella's opinion.

3) The Ways to Resist Patriarchy in The Poor Things Film by Yorgos Lanthimos

1. Becoming Economically Independent

Simone de Beauvoir stated that women's freedom depends on economic independence. While women remain financially dependent on men, they will remain in a subordinate position.

11. Resistance Through Own Income (01:29:01-01:29:13)

Duncan: You... fucked for money?

Bella: And as an experiment. Which I think will aid us in our relationship as it gladdens my heart for you, and my heart has been a little bit dim on your weepy sweary person lately.

The analysis in this scene, Bella took the initiative to earn money by going to a brothel so she could buy food and rent a place to stay, while Duncan was passive and did not contribute. By earning her own income, Bella not only met her basic needs but also reversed the power dynamics in their relationship. When Bella provided food for Duncan and firmly responded to his insults, she demonstrated the ability to defend herself verbally and emotionally a form of resistance against male dominance. Bella's statement criticizes the double standards applied by Duncan, who previously praised her beauty but then belittled her simply because she used her body as a means of survival. This scene emphasizes that economic independence empowers women to maintain their self-respect and challenge oppressive patriarchal structures.

2. Joining and Involving Social Community

Simone de Beauvoir stated that women who have achieved independence have the privilege of forming equal relationships, without being bound by emotional or economic dependence.

12. Emancipation Through Social Awareness (01:43:11-01:43:25)

Bella: Go home Duncan. Our time has ended. I look at you and feel nothing but the lingering question of how did I ever want you?

Toinette: Oooo. And we must go to the meeting of socialists.

Duncan: You're whores!

Bella: We are our own means of production. Get out of the way.

In this scene, Bella's resistance to the patriarchal dominance represented by Duncan is clearly evident. After experiencing various forms of control and objectification, Bella firmly rejects Duncan's marriage proposal. Her rejection is not only personal but also ideological—she chooses to continue her journey toward the socialist community with Toinette. Bella's words, "Go home, Duncan. Our time has ended," mark the end of the unequal relationship that has bound her.

Moreover, Bella's final response, "We are our own means of production. Get out of the way," is a powerful symbol of the independence and class consciousness that has developed within her. That sentence directly challenges the patriarchal notion that has long positioned women as objects of production controlled by men, both economically and sexually.

3. Improving the Quality of Education

Women's independence is often perceived as a threat to men, because they are able to do things that were previously considered the dominant role of men, such as working, thinking critically, and freely determining life choices.

13. Revenge Through Knowledge (02:11:14-02:12:30)

Bella: I will not watch him bleed to death Max, but I agree, he could do with improvement.

Max: I have controlled the bleeding.

Bella: I have the notes.

Bella: I am never happier than when I am in here.

Radical resistance to patriarchy in *Poor Things* is manifest through the main character Bella's mastery of medical knowledge. Her decision to refuse the anesthetic solution given to her by Alfie, and instead use it as a means of self-defense, reflects women's efforts to regain control over their bodies and consciousness. This action becomes even more significant given that Alfie threatens to cut off Bella's vagina as a form of control over her desires and autonomy.

The subsequent action of replacing Alfie's brain with a goat's brain serves as a symbolic representation of the deconstruction of patriarchal power. Instead of submitting to male domination, Bella takes full control through the application of science, a field historically dominated by men. She uses Godwin Baxter's experiment notes, which were previously used to swap his own brain with that of the fetus he

was carrying. In this process, Bella involves Max and Prim, who have also assist Godwin in his medical practices.

Bella's actions are not merely an act of personal revenge but also a sharp critique of the patriarchal system that oppresses women through control over their bodies, sexuality, and access to knowledge. In this context, education and science serve not only as tools for liberation but also as strategic weapons enabling women to challenge and overturn unequal power dynamics.

E. CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that Bella experiences two primary forms of patriarchy private and public with private patriarchy being the most dominant throughout the film. These systems manifest in various ways, including gender inequality, women's oppression, marginalization, and unequal participation in decision-making. Bella challenges the patriarchal order by attaining economic independence, participating in social communities, and pursuing higher education. Her resistance reflects both intellectual and social emancipation through reading philosophical works, exchanging ideas, and achieving financial autonomy. The study also reveals that patriarchy grants men disproportionate power to control and oppress women while enabling some women to reinforce patriarchal norms for personal gain. Through Bella Baxter's defiance in *Poor Things*, the film highlights women's equal rights with men in sexual freedom, intellectual pursuit, and workplace safety, ultimately serving as a critique of the continued normalization of patriarchy in society.

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