

**OBJECTIFICATION SUFFERED BY BLACK WOMAN
IN SUZAN-LORI PARKS' *VENUS***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK
IBRAHIM MALANG**

2020

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THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

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2020**


STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled **“Objectification Suffered by Black Woman in Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus*”** is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 17th June 2020

The Researcher




Laras Adistya Putri

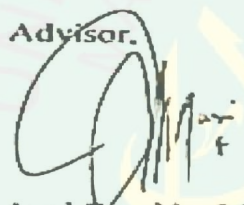
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APPROVAL SHEET

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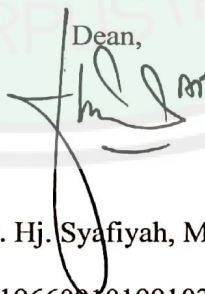


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MOTTO

**Live by respecting each other,
because human beings are all equal.**



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to everyone who wonders if I'm writing about them.

Yes, I am. I hope you can be free.

Also for my parents, I couldn't have done it without your genetic material.

You both are great.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Bismillaahirrohmaanirrohiim

Praised be to Allah, the Almighty and the Most Merciful, the Lord of the world, the master of the day after, who always gives the happiness and health for this powerless creature. Praise and gratitude be to Him, who has given guidance and blessing so that I can smoothly finish this thesis entitled, “Objectification Suffered by Black Woman in Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus*.” His mercy and peace be upon the prophet Muhammad SAW, who has brought the Islamic norms and value to the entire world, who has brought us from the darkness to the lightness.

My gratitude goes to the Rector of UIN Malang, Prof. Dr. Abdul Haris, M.Ag., the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Dr. Hj. Syafiyah, M.A., and the Head of the Department of English Literature, Ibu Rina Sari, M.Pd. In particular, I wish to express my gratitude to my advisor, Ibu Asni Furaida, M.A., whose valuable suggestions and guidance has been helped me finish this thesis. I really owe much to her time, her patient, and her constructive comments.

I have taken efforts in this thesis. However, it would not have been possible without the kind support and help of many individuals. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of them. My first unbounded thank goes to my father, Rochmad, and my guardian mother, Umiati, who sent me to this university. Thank you for your endless care, advice, and motivation. Thank you for providing me a continuous moral and material support through every moment of my life. To my older sister, Ratna, I am so glad we are family. I give you my best gratitude.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the precious assistance of my friends, Sari, Arikah, Hafid, Alfin, Zaza, Herny, Santi, Chandra, and all of my friends that could not be mentioned here. Thanks for giving me a chance to enter your life and make a friendship start from we were in the first semester in this university until now. Thanks for becoming my supportive mates. I hope it will be last forever. May God give me a chance to repay your kindness.

The last but not the least, I am very thankful to Gema Gita Bahana Student Choir for showing me another side of studying in college. All of the members are lovely and it feels like a family. Thanks for coloring my life. Thank you for the experience. It's mean a lot to me.

Finally, I modestly realize that this thesis is still far from perfection. Thus, I will always appreciate the coming constructive comments from the readers. Hopefully, this work can give a valuable contribution to the field of literary study.

Malang, 16th May 2020

Laras Adistya Putri

ABSTRACT

Putri, Laras Adistya (2020) *Objectification Suffered by Black Woman in Suzan-Lori Parks' Venus*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Asni Furaida, M.A.

Key Words: Objectification, feminism, black woman, black female.

According to Martha C Nussbaum, objectification is the seeing and/or treating of what is not really an object, what is, in fact, a human being, as an object (Nussbaum, 1995). It is commonly used to criticize or express skepticism about the attitudes of one person to another. Objectification is a leading cause of other women issues such as unfair treatment and payment, violence, sexual harassment, and so on. It is because women's value is degraded into an object that can use for other people's purposes. However, some of the forms of objectification are too vague and less identifiable.

This research aims to find the forms of objectification suffered by a black woman in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* and factors that galvanize it. This research also aims to increase reader awareness about objectification and supposed to decrease the cases. This research is literary criticism that used feminist approach to engage with the research questions. The researcher answered the research question by employing the objectification theory proposed by Nussbaum (1995) and Fredrickson & Robert (1997).

This research shows that there are six forms of objectification suffered by Venus. There are instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, violability, ownership, and denial of subjectivity. Factors that galvanized the objectification portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* are sexuality, class, and ethnicity. Objectification is related to male heterosexuality that socially sanctioned rights of all males to sexualize all females and placed women in the second sex after men so that women are always potentially looked at, evaluated, dictated, and limited. The second factor is the class. The lower class tends to be treated badly by the higher class and have no power to resist. Objectification toward Venus is worse because she is black. As a black lived among white society, she was seen as the "other". Her appearance was called "freaks", "oddities", and "curiosities". Even the scientists were interested in her physical attractiveness and attempted to compare her as a female of the lowest human species to the highest ape, orangutan. They see her as a separate lower race, a powerless primitive so that she can be dominated and exploited.

ABSTRAK

Putri, Laras Adistya (2020) *Objektifikasi yang Dialami oleh Perempuan Berkulit Hitam dalam drama Venus oleh Suzan-Lori Parks*. Skripsi. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Asni Furaida, M.A.

Kata Kunci: Objektifikasi, Feminisme, Perempuan Berkulit Hitam.

Menurut Martha C Nussbaum, objektifikasi adalah melihat dan/atau memperlakukan manusia sebagai benda (Nussbaum, 1995). Istilah ini biasa digunakan untuk mengkritik atau mempertanyakan sikap seseorang kepada orang lain. Objektifikasi adalah penyebab dari munculnya isu lain terhadap perempuan seperti perlakuan tidak adil, diskriminasi gaji, kekerasan, pelecehan seksual, dan lain-lain. Hal ini dikarenakan nilai perempuan diturunkan dan disamakan sebagai benda yang bisa digunakan untuk tujuan orang lain. Meskipun begitu, beberapa bentuk objektifikasi terlalu samar dan tidak sulit teridentifikasi.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan bentuk-bentuk objektifikasi yang dialami oleh perempuan berkulit hitam dan faktor pendorongnya di dalam drama Suzan-Lori Parks berjudul *Venus*. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat publik tentang objektifikasi dan diharapkan dapat mengurangi kasus yang berhubungan dengan objektifikasi. Penelitian ini adalah jenis penelitian dengan menggunakan kritik sastra yang menggunakan pendekatan feminisme untuk berhubungan dengan pertanyaan penelitian. Peneliti menjawab pertanyaan penelitian menggunakan teori objektifikasi dari Nussbaum (1995) dan Fredrickson & Robert (1997).

Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada 6 bentuk objektifikasi yang dialami oleh Venus, yaitu *instrumentality*, *denial of autonomy*, *inertness*, *violability*, *ownership*, dan *denial of subjectivity*. Faktor yang mendorong objektifikasi yang digambarkan dalam drama *Venus* Suzan-Lori Parks adalah seksualitas, kelas sosial, dan etnisitas. Objektifikasi berhubungan dengan heteroseksualitas yang menempatkan perempuan pada posisi kedua setelah laki-laki sehingga laki-laki dapat mengevaluasi dan menilai perempuan. Faktor kedua adalah kelas sosial. Orang dengan status sosial yang rendah cenderung diperlakukan buruk oleh orang dengan kelas sosial lebih tinggi dan tidak memiliki kekuatan untuk melawan. Objektifikasi terhadap Venus semakin buruk karena dia adalah perempuan berkulit hitam. Sebagai perempuan berkulit hitam yang tinggal di lingkungan orang berkulit putih, Venus dipandang sebagai sesuatu yang berbeda dan aneh. Bahkan para ilmuwan tertarik pada penampilan fisiknya dan mencoba untuk mengaitkannya dengan orangutan. Mereka menganggap Venus sebagai ras rendah dan primitif sehingga bisa didominasi dan dieksploitasi.

مستخلص البحث

فوتري، لاراس أديستيا. 2020. التجسيد على المرأة السوداء في مسرحية فينوس لسوزان-لوري فركس. بحث الجامعي. قسم الأدب الإنجليزية، كلية الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا ملك إبراهيم مالانج.

المشرفة: اسني فريدا، الماجستير.
الكلمة المفتاحية: التجسيد، النسوية، المرأة السوداء.

قالت مرتا ج. نوسبوم، التجسيد هو أن ينظر أو يعتبر الشخص كشيء (نوسبوم، 1995). استخدم هذه المصطلحة للنقد أو للاستأصال موقف الشخص للفرد. التجسيد هو مسبب لظهور الإشاعة على المرأة كعاملها بالظلم، وتفريق في الراتب، والشدة، واستهبال الجنسي وغيرها. كان معاملة المرأة كشيء لاستفادها الإنسان تجعلها محقرة ولا في نفس الطبقة مع الرجل. على رغم من بعض التجسيد خفيا واصعاب اكتشافه.

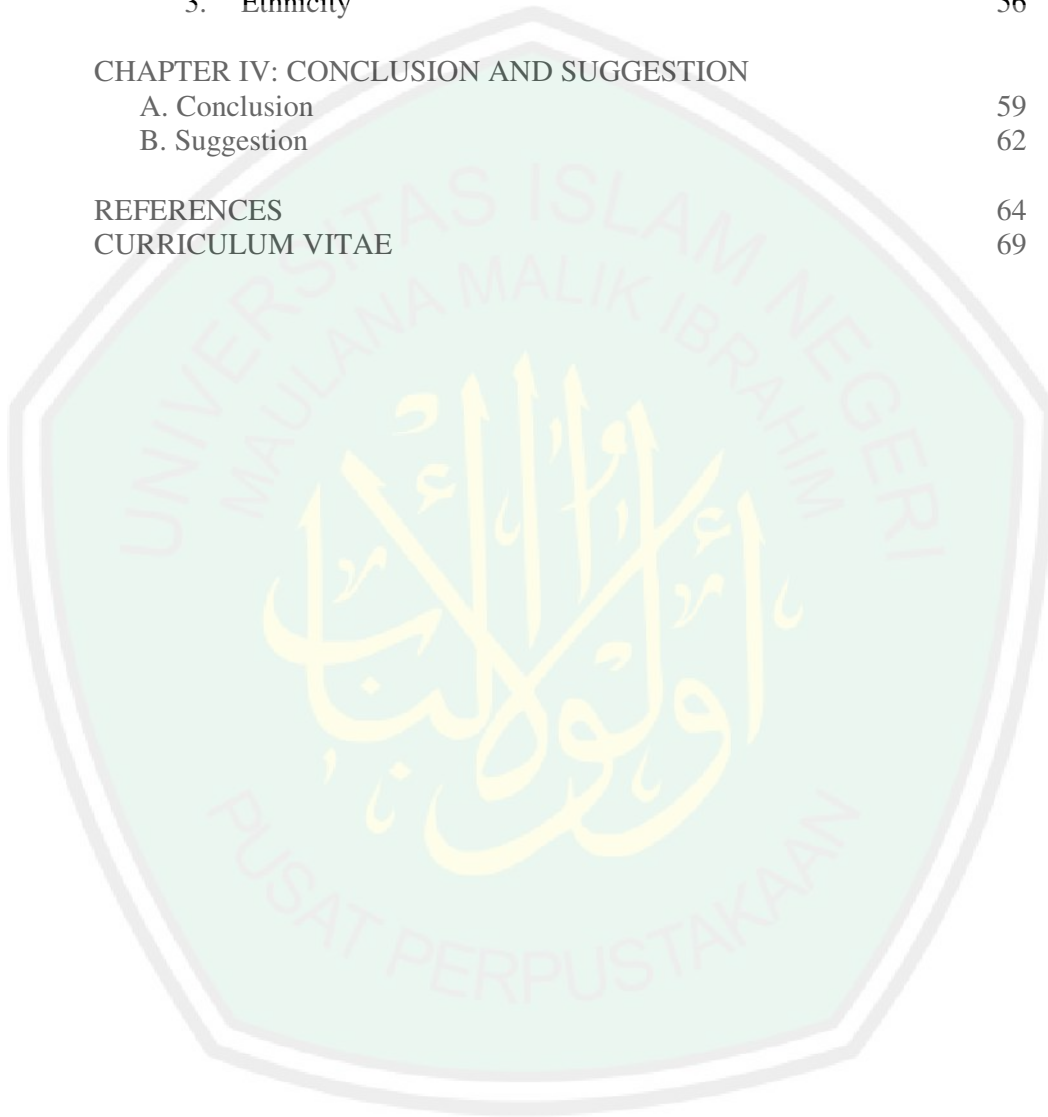
هدف هذا البحث لاكتشاف اشكال التجسيد على المرأة السوداء وعوامل دفعه في مسرحية سوزان-لوري فركس تحت الموضوع فينوس. هدف هذا البحث ايضا ان يرقى فهم الناس على التجسيد ورجاء ان يخفض الاشاعة يرتبط بالتجسيد. هذا البحث هو النقد الأدبي بالنظرية النسوية، اجابة لأسئلة البحث في هذا البحث بالنظرية التجسيد على النظر نوسبوم (1995) وفريدركسون وروبرت (1997).

حصل هذا البحث على ستة اشكال التجسيد شعرته فينوس، منها *violability*، *inertness*، *denial of autonomy*، *instrumentality* و *denial of subjectivity* و *ownership*. العوامل المدافع على التجسيد صور في مسرحية فينوس لسوزان-لوري فركس الا وهو الجنسية، الطبقة الاجتماعية، والأصل العرقي. التجسيد يرتبط بالهتروسكسوالتي التي توقع المرأة في طبقة الثانية تحت الرجل، فلذلك قام الرجل بالتقييم على المرأة او النساء. العوامل الثانية هي الطبقة الاجتماعية يعامل شخص في موقف عالي الشخص في موقف منخفض احيانا بالتفريق والشدة وهو ضعيف ليس معه قوة للإطلاق على حاله. كان التجسيد على فينوس اشد واشد مرة بعد مرات لأنه سوداء. كالمرأة السوداء في هيئة الاشخاص بيضاء، نُظر فينوس بالشيء مختلف وغريب. بل نظر الامهار على فينوس كأنها تساوي بالقرد. يعبرون فينوس كالباق المنخفض والبدائي فلذا يستطيعون ان يستثمرها.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Since the appearance of the feminist movement, women have already aware to fight for equality between men and women. Many have begun to vocalize women's rights and freedom in all aspects of life. They use their ability to take part in society. Their voices start to be considered. They also have the opportunity to enter the political sphere. They are allowed to work and become financially independent. However, traditional belief that takes women as the object is still mushrooming. Then, women have to experience injustice and struggle more than men to achieve their rights. The worse, women are still experiencing exploitation, violence, sexual harassment, and many more. This is what women must fight for.

The root of all of these is objectification. Objectification can be described as "an act of treating a person, or sometimes an animal as an object or a thing" (Arluke, 1988). If there are still people who are consciously and/or unconsciously seen women as an object, women will continue to experience another misery. It is reasonable because objectification can lead to -and perhaps enables- women's oppression, ranging from discrimination on employment and sexual violence to the trivialization of women's work and achievements (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

It often heard that ill-treatment over women is not only done by men but also by society in general. Black women ironically have to struggle more from the objectification done by men from their own-race, white women, and white men. For them, objectification is often influenced by racial stereotypes: African American women, for example, are commonly portrayed not only as objects but also as animals (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Cowan, 1995; Leidholdt, 1981).

The effects of objectification are dangerous. Objectification on a person can lead people in power to exploit a person for their own benefit, success, and pleasure. The example is slavery. It is a kind of humiliation. Feminists claim that those people in power are able to take advantage of them (people whom they objectify) distinctly because they are considered as passive and rather helpless (MacGregor, 2006). Moreover, objectification on women increased domination, violence, and sexual harassment.

In Indonesia, most people traditionally think that in marriage life, a wife should obey her husband whatever it takes. This is good, but it becomes worse when the husband is not wise and does domestic violence. Many cases ended up with the wife give an excuse for her husband with an odd reason that her husband is eligible to do that. Most women who still hold this value will say, "I am your wife, so that I am yours and you have the right to do whatever you want to me. Even it will kill me." In public places, many women experienced harassment. It can be formed as catcalling, groping, and the worst is raping. Women's body considered a thing that worth being harassed. This happening reflects that in fact, women are still seen as an object.

In this research, the researcher wants to use a play by Suzan-Lori Parks entitled *Venus*. In this play, Parks portrayed Saartjie Baartman, a teenager from KhoiKhoi tribe, South Africa, almost annihilated by the Dutch, who was brought to Europe in 19th century by empty promises of prosperity only to be sold as a slave and later on, to dance at public and private sites as a sideshow attraction, and presented as “Venus Hottentot” in England (Jasim & Janoory, 2018; Stephenson, 2018). *Venus* has been examined methodically by various scholars who commented on the sexuality and femininity of African female offspring (Jasim & Janoory, 2018). Upon her death, French scientists dissected and exhibited her genitals in Musee de l’Homme in Paris until 1985; it wasn’t until 2002 that her remains were returned to South Africa (Henderson, 2014).

The researcher wants to focus on the objectification issue that was faced by a black woman in a play by Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus*. Thus, the researcher will use the feminist objectification theory as the main theory to analyze the problem. Some theorists have different views about objectification. However, in this research, the researcher will trace back the objectification theory proposed by Martha C. Nussbaum. In addition, the researcher will also employ the feminist objectification theory proposed by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Robert. This feminist objectification theory attempts to push the general idea behind the sociocultural analysis of the female body a step further within the psychology of women and gender. Since the focus of the analysis is the black female character, the researcher will use black feminism as a supporting theory that can strengthen the analysis. Black Feminism appears to be inextricably related to argues that

sexism, class oppression, and racism. Black feminism is often connected to postcolonial feminism as both respond to racism and seek recognition from men in their own cultures and from Western feminists.

A play by Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* is chosen by the researcher because the story is very interesting. This kind of play is a phenomenal and unique literary work. This is a pseudo-historical drama. "The blending of truth and fiction is both distortion and a historical reconstruction" (Young, 1997). The work is not meant to be historically accurate. Rather it uses the concept of Baartman's career as a way to explore colonization and objectification; as Parks explained, "most of it's fabricated... It's questioning the history of history... It embraces the unrecorded truth" (Kolin, 2010). This play also won two OBIE Awards in 1995-1996. The first is OBIE Award for Playwriting for Suzan-Lori Parks. The second is OBIE Award for Distinguished Performance by an Actress for Adina Porter. Suzan-Lori Parks herself is a reputable American playwright, screenwriter, musician, and novelist. She won many awards. One of them is the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2002 which makes her the first African American woman to achieve this honor for drama (Suzan-Lori Parks Biography, 2015).

Further research about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* is important to increase social awareness about the fact that objectification exists and this is the leading cause of the global women issues such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, domination, humiliation, victim-blaming, and so on that have been fought by feminists over years. The researcher hopes this research can inspire the reader to help fight to eliminate objectification. The last, the researcher hopes this research

will become a source of knowledge for those who are interested in doing the relevant study.

In conducting this research, the researcher is inspired by several studies in a similar field. One of the studies is conducted by Jasim & Janoory in 2018. The research is about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. The primary objective of the paper is to critically explore oppression and suppression of African American women in western societies as depicted by Suzan-Lori Parks in her play, *Venus*, using the postcolonial feminist theory of the subaltern. They found out that Suzan-Lori Parks in her play, *Venus*, portrayed oppression and dehumanization of African American women in western societies. This involves racial inequality in employment, housing, and a wide range of other social domains has renewed interest in the possible role of discrimination as illustrated by Parks in *Venus*. Jasim & Janoory also discuss the numerous emancipatory efforts women made when striving to absolve themselves of the forces, oppression, and dehumanization. Finally, the paper shows that despite the obvious and prevalent acts of discrimination for African women over the years, the problem remains. Contrary to the pre-Civil Rights era, when racial bias and discrimination were obvious and common, today discrimination is less easily identified and clear.

Young (1997) wrote an essay about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. The focus of the essay is Parks' representation of Saartjie Baartman as an accomplice in her exploitation. Young criticized Parks' play. She argues that the historical accounts contradict Parks' representation. She also argues that Baartman was a victim, not an accomplice, not a mutual participant in her objectification, and Parks' stage

representation of her complicity diminishes the tragedy of her life as a nineteenth-century Black woman stripped of her humanity at the hands of a hostile, racist society that held her and those like her in contempt. Young found out that Baartman has been twice victimized; first of all, by 19th century Victorian society and again by the Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* and its chorus of critics.

Henderson (2014) conducted research that focused on Sarah Baartman known as Venus Hottentot and black women's identity from a historical perspective. She was talking about how odds human rights at that time. Over 20 decades ago, Baartman's body parts are dissected in the name of science. It was displayed in the museum for decades, presented as a "missing link" between humans and animals. A lot of people questioned where were the laws at that time? Henderson found out that the body of the black woman is always public, always exposed, until today. The example is Nicki Minaj and Lil' Kim. They use their bodies as sexual ploys in the music industry and elsewhere, in order to get paid for how they want to and when they want to.

Stephenson (2017) conducted research about Venus Hottentot from a historical perspective. The methodology of the research is based on the philosophy and relies on co-performance as interdependent ethnography: a way to engage in active reflexivity, share power and problematize how American culture slut shames Baartman, her fictional character Venus, Black women, and all women. In her writing, Stephenson was talking about the history of Sara Baartman, known as Venus Hottentot, and her miserable life. Stephenson also explained about Baartman suffered from slut-shaming and being sidelined, how

black women be treated unfairly in the world because of negative stereotypes made by society, especially about sexual stereotypes. The purpose of this research article is to share power with all women, especially black women in western societies. The result of this research article is the re-creations of Baartman. The researcher revealed the hidden, pluralize Baartman's identity, and tell what has not been embodied and historicized about her, about women who should not have to say sorry for being simultaneously sexual and sexualized.

Based on the previous studies above, most of the researchers are talking generally about oppression, human rights, slavery, unfair treatment, and negative stereotypes about black women in western society. In this research, the researcher will take up a more specific topic which is objectification. The topic of objectification is still limited and needs to be explored because it is a kind of important topic and still relevant nowadays. Objectification is a leading cause of global women issues and many do not understand this issue. Most women even do not aware that they are being objectified. It is because of the lack of socialization about objectification and social practice that happened in society over the years. By bringing up a more specific topic which is objectification, this research is supposed to be a deeper analysis. This research will employ a theory that was not used in the previous studies which is the objectification theory by Martha C. Nussbaum. To support and strengthen the analysis, the theory proposed by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Robert will be used. This theory also provides the effect of objectification on women's psychology. Objectification theories

proposed by two different theorists are supposed to give a broader view of objectification.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher intends to focus the study to answer these following questions:

1. What are the forms of objectification that are portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*?
2. What are the factors that galvanize the objectification as portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*?

C. Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the problems of the study above, the objectives of the study are formulated as follow:

1. To give elaborated description about the forms of objectification portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*.
2. To analyze the factors that galvanize the objectification portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*.

D. Scope and Limitation

Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* is a literary work that is rich and could be analyzed through many points of view such as political, economic, social, culture, and psychology. However, this research only focused on analyzing the form of objectification and its factors portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* under the

scope of feminism. This research does not tell broadly about feminism and its movement, but it is limited to feminist objectification theory that is related to black feminism and postcolonial feminism. The analysis only focused on objectification suffered by Venus, a black female character in the play by Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*.

E. Significance of the Study

There are several significant points of consideration for conducting this research. This research is supposed to be beneficial both theoretically and practically in the area of literature by acquainting feminism as a concept to analyze literary works and contributing to improve the knowledge of the readers about objectification and its factors.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enriching the development of literary criticism found in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. Furthermore, the researcher hopes this research can be used as additional reference and provide further references for the next researcher in the analysis which is related to objectification and its factors in the light of feminism. Practically, this research is expected to persuade readers to think critically and increase social awareness about global women issues especially objectification.

F. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid different understanding, the researcher provides a definition for some terms frequently used in this research as follows:

1. Objectification

Objectification is the act of treating a person, or sometimes an animal as an object or a thing (Arluke, 1988). The common thread running through all forms of sexual objectification is the experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) valued predominantly for its use to (or consumption by) others. Certainly, the experience and response to sexual objectification for each woman will be different. The combinations of ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and other physical and personal attributes create unique sets of experiences across women, as well as experiences shared by particular subgroups (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

2. Venus Hottentot

Venus Hottentot is a stage-name given to Saraa Baartman, a South African girl who was sent to Europe to present to the public in 1810. Venus Hottentot then becomes the major character in Suzan-Lori Parks's play entitled *Venus*.

3. Black Feminism

Black feminism evolved in connection with the second wave of the American women's movement in the late 1960s. Black women (the other third world and working women) generally engaged from the beginning of the feminist movement, but elitism within the movement has served to obscure black women's participation. Early feminist movements that were led by white

middle-class women had ignored oppression based on racism and classism. Thus, in 1973, Black feminists thought that a separate Black feminist group is a necessity to be formed. This became the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) (Moraga & Anzaldua, 2015).

4. Missing Link

The missing link is an unscientific term that typically refers to transitional fossils in the human evolution theory. It is generally used in popular science and media to describe any transitional fossil between humans and apes. This concept of the missing link has been inspired by the pre-Darwinian human evolution theory of the Great Chain of Being and by the now-outdated notion stated that one organism is more primitive than others.

G. Previous Studies

Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* was first published in 1997. It has attracted a great reaction for its readers. This play contains controversy that makes many people questioned about what happened to Venus. While many researchers interested in conducting the analysis. They give critical comments in various perspectives such as below.

Jasim & Janoory in 2018 conducted research about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. The primary objective of the paper is to critically explore oppression and suppression of African American women in the western societies as depicted by Susan Lori Parks in her play, *Venus*, using the postcolonial feminist theory of the

subaltern. They found out that Suzan-Lori Parks in her play, *Venus*, portrayed oppression and dehumanization of African American women in western societies. This includes racial inequality in employment, housing, and a wide range of other social domains has renewed interest in the possible role of discrimination as portrayed by Parks in *Venus*. Jasim & Janoory also explores the varied emancipatory efforts women made when striving to absolve themselves of the forces, oppression, and dehumanization. Finally, the paper reveals that despite the obvious and prevalent acts of discrimination for African women over the years, the problem persists. In contrary to the pre-Civil Rights era, when racial bias and discrimination were obvious and common, today discrimination is less readily identifiable and clear (Jasim & Janoory, 2018).

Young 1997 wrote an essay about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. The focus of the essay is Parks' representation of Saartjie Baartman as an accomplice in her own exploitation. Young criticized Parks' play. She argues that the historical accounts contradict Parks' representation. She also argues that Baartman was a victim, not an accomplice, not a mutual participant in this demeaning objectification, and Parks' stage representation of her complicity diminishes the tragedy of her life as a nineteenth-century Black woman stripped of her humanity at the hands of a hostile, racist society that held her and those like her in contempt. Young found out that Baartman becomes twice victimized; first, by 19th century Victorian society and again by the Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* and its chorus of critics (Young, 1997).

Henderson 2014 conducted research that focused on Sarah Baartman, known as Venus Hottentot, and black women's identity from a historical perspective. She was talking about how odds human rights at that time. Over 20 decades ago, Baartman's body parts are dissected in the name of science. It was displayed in the museum for decades, presented as a "missing link" between humans and animals. Many questioned where were the laws at that time? Henderson found out that black women's body is always public, always exposed, until this current day. The example is Nicki Minaj and Lil' Kim. They use their bodies as sexual ploys in the music industry and elsewhere, in order to get paid how they want to and when they want to (Henderson, 2014).

Stephenson in 2017 conducted research about Venus Hottentot from a historical perspective. The methodology of the research is rooted in philosophy and relies on co-performance as interdependent ethnography: a way to engage in active reflexivity, share power, and problematize how American culture slut shames Baartman, her fictional character, Venus, black women, and all women. In her writing, Stephenson was talking about the history of Sara Baartman, known as Venus Hottentot, and her miserable life. Stephenson also explained about Baartman suffered from slut-shaming and othering, how black women be treated unfairly in the world because of negative stereotypes made by society, especially about sexual stereotypes. The purpose of this research article is to share power with all women, especially black women in western societies. The result of this research article is the re-creations of Baartman. The researcher revealed the hidden, pluralize Baartman's identity, and tell what has not been embodied and

historicized about her, about women who should not have to say sorry for being simultaneously sexual and sexualized (Stephenson, 2018).

Jamie Robinson in his thesis (2015) conducted research about Venus that becomes the roots of black female iconography. The objective of this research is to give insights about discrimination mixed with his personal experience as a multiracial person. Exploring prejudice and psychological belief about black women, this research aims to explain how a marginalized individual in history, a freak show performer named Venus Hottentot can create a global obsession with the black female mind and body over 200 years. She becomes the symbol of the sexualized view of the black female icon today (Robinson, n.d.).

From the previous studies above, it is showed that many critics have raised the different themes to discuss about the story of Venus. The researcher used that to find the gap in the studies. Moreover, the researcher used it to observe the basic message of the story through various points of view. Due to this consideration, the researcher decides to conduct research about objectification suffered by black woman in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*.

These previous studies below are used to see the overview of the application of objectification theory to analyze the literary work. This is necessary to give guidance in analyzing the literary work using the objectification theory. The first is research conducted by Permatasari in 2015. She conducted research about objectification in *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E.L James. She had two objectives. The first is to find the depiction of Anastasia Steele using character and characterization theory by Murphy. The second objective is finding

objectification by using the radical-cultural feminism theory. She also employed the objectification theory by Martha C Nussbaum to support her analysis.

This research found out that Anastasia Steele is a character that has sex appeal and such a submissive person. Moreover, Anastasia Steele dealt with seven notions of objectification proposed by Nussbaum. Permatasari explained that objectification on Anastasia Steele happened because the existence of masculinity in a heterosexual relationship.

Another study is conducted by Pratiwi & Tiwon in 2013. They conducted research about female objectification in E.E. Cummings' Poetry. Using radical feminists' resistance reading approach, they try to dig how women are being portrayed in the poems. The theories used in this research are radical feminism, objectification theory by Nussbaum, and Dehumanization theory. The selected poems are *as* (1918), *my smallheaded pearshaped* (1925), and *she being Brand* (1926).

This research found out that female objectification exists in those three poems with varying degrees, intensity, and ways. However, the objectification is concealed with the presentation of women being sexually liberated, yet in practice, their sexuality is still objectified. The objectification is extended up to dehumanization where women's values are reduced into animals and objects.

H. Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This research designs in literary criticism that used a feminist approach to engage with the research questions. The researcher focused on objectification suffered by a major female character in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. In order to present more explanation, description, and interpretation, this research used many literary sources which mostly are long descriptions about objectification, black feminism theory, and further information about Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. In the problems of the study, the researcher used open questions that need to be answer broadly by words, not numbers. The researcher also provides many descriptions, explanations, and examples.

2. Data Source

Due to the need to discuss objectification in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* in the light of feminism, this research will use only one primary source. The primary source is the traditional objects of analysis in literary criticism, including texts from all literary genres, such as fiction, poetry, or drama (Klarer, 1999). Primary data in this research is the object of this research, which is the script of a play by Suzan-Lori Parks titled *Venus*. Other references apply in this research such as journals, articles, books, news, and other related data that explain related topics and theory (objectification suffered by a black woman) will be used to help to analyze the data.

3. Data Collection

Data collection is done by passing several steps. The first step is the researcher reads the primary data, the script of *Venus* play to get deep

understanding and find the problem. Then, the researcher reads secondary data as a comparison and to enrich the knowledge about objectification on black women in the postcolonial era. After that, the researcher will consider which one data in primary and secondary data that is appropriate to answer the problems of the study.

4. Data Analysis

The researcher analyzing the data using the theories under the scope and limitation. After collecting the data, the researcher classified the data. First of all, the researcher explored all the data and classified it in the form of objectification. Then, the researcher considered which kind of objectification that is suffered by the major female character in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*. After that, the researcher analyzed the data to find the factors that galvanized objectification. All those analyses related to objectification theory and black feminist theory.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter will broadly explain theories that are related to this research. There are feminist literary criticism, feminism, black feminism, and objectification theory.

A. Feminist Literary Criticism

The feminist movement has been developed by the variety of disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, economics, women's studies, literary criticism, art history, psychoanalysis, and philosophy (Zajko & Leonard, 2006; Howe & Aguiar, 2001; Pollock, 2007; Ettinger, Butler, Massumi, Pollock, 2006; Florence & Foster, 2001). The theory of feminism aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and lived experience; it has developed theories in a variety of disciplines to respond to issues concerning gender. Topics explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy (Chodorow, 1989; Gilligan, 1977).

The most productive and revolutionary movement among the younger theories of literary criticism and contextual approach is feminist literary criticism. This critical approach is part of the movement that has developed itself in almost every academic discipline and has grown particularly strong in the various branches of modern literary criticism. Feminist literary criticism emerges with the assumption that literary criticism should be re-examined from a gender-oriented

viewpoint. Much recent feminist criticism has highlighted and explored the differences between women and men.

Since the experiences of the sexes are different, the argument, the values, the sensibilities, and their responses to literature are different. Literature written by women is different from literature written by men. Works written by women are seen by some feminist critics as embodying the experiences of a minority culture, a group marginalized by the dominant male culture (Barnet, 2008).

Elaine Showalter explains that the development of feminist theory in the field of literary criticism has three phases. The first phase is “feminist critique”, in which the feminist reader examines the ideologies behind literary phenomena. The second phase is “gynocriticism”, in which the woman is the producer of textual meaning. The third phase is “gender theory”, in which the ideological inscription and the literary effects of the sex/gender system are explored (Showalter, 1979)

Thus, in the late 1960s, this movement started with mushrooming of thematic issues such as the portrayal of women in literary work by male researchers and the identification of woman readers with the fictional female character in literary work. This early attempts of feminist literary criticism focused on stereotypes of women in the men-dominated literary tradition. Further phase in feminist literary criticism is the use of the researcher’s historical approach. In the middle of the 1970s, feminist literary criticism gave more attention to female researchers that all the time are being neglected in the literary tradition. Thus, they focus to propagate an independent female literary tradition (Klarer, 1999).

Feminist critics rightly point out that men have established the conventions of literature and the canon, which is, the body of literature that is said to be worth reading (Barnet, 2008). Men are praised for being strong and active in this patriarchal or male-dominated body of literature, while women are supposed to be weak and passive. Thus, the admirable male in the world of fairy tales is the powerful hero (e.g. Jack, the Giant-Killer), and the admirable female is the passive Sleeping Beauty. Active women such as the wicked stepmother or the witches are generally villainous.

A woman who is hearing or reading the story of Sleeping Beauty or Little Red Riding Hood (rescued by the powerful woodcutter) or any other works in which women seem to be trivialized will respond differently from a man. For example, a woman may be socially influenced to admire Sleeping Beauty but only at great cost to her mental well-being. A more resistant female reader may recognize in herself no kinship with the beautiful, passive Sleeping Beauty and may respond to the story indignantly. Another way to put it is this: The male reader sees a romantic story, while the resistant female reader sees an oppression story (Barnet, 2008).

In short, women should resist the representation of how women ought to behave those male researchers, or female researchers who have inherited patriarchal values, bury in their books. A woman must read as a woman, “exorcising the male mind that has been implanted in women.” In resisting the obvious meanings, for instance, the false claim that male values are universal values; women may discover more significant meanings (Barnet, 2008).

Feminist criticism has been concerned not only with the depiction of women and men in a male-determined literary canon and with female responses to these images but also with yet another topic: women's writing. Women's opportunities to become writers of fiction, poetry, and drama were lower than men. For one thing, they have been less well educated in the things that the male patriarchy valued, but sometimes people have ignored a work only because it was written by a woman even though that woman succeeded in writing. Feminists have further argued that certain forms of writing have been especially the domain of women. For instance, journals, diaries, and letters; and predictably, these forms have not been given adequate space in the traditional, male-oriented canon (Banet, 2008).

B. Feminism

Grew out of the women's movement of the 1960s, feminism tends to rise the notion that women are essentially similar to men and must be treated equally. For decades, women have spoken out for their sex and their rights in many different countries and numerous ways. It involves the fight against gender stereotypes and the search for educational and professional opportunities for women equal to those for men. Moreover, there are so much further to be campaigned by feminist movements, such as the right to vote, to hold public office, to work, to earn fair wages, to eliminate gender pay gap, to own property, to enter contracts, to have equal rights within marriage, to have maternity leave, to

access legal abortions, and the equally important is to protect women from rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence (Echols, 1989).

Until the 1960s, in England, the word 'feminist' usually had a negative meaning. Women who fought for women's rights would have described themselves as 'feminists.' Attacks on feminists often merge into the misogyny. Feminist before the 1960s was the name given to the displeased or despise woman, as much as 'man-hater' or 'castrating bitch,' 'harridan', or 'witch' (Barnet, 2008).

Based on the timeline it happened, the modern western feminist movement is divided into four waves (Humm, 1995; Walker, 1992; Chamberlain, 2017). First-wave feminism occurred during the 19th and early-20th centuries. It focused on promoting equal rights for women in marriage, parenting, contract, property, and suffrage. Second-wave feminism happened in the mid-20th century where women still lack significant rights. Its campaign concerned for legal and social equality for women beyond suffrage, such as ending gender discrimination (Freedman, 2003). Third-wave feminism occurred in the late 20th and early-21st centuries. It focused on individuality and diversity (Krolokke, & Sorensen, 2005). Third-wave feminism argues that the previous feminist movement was over-emphasized to the experience of upper-middle-class white women. Fourth wave feminism started around 2012. It used social media to combat sexual harassment, rape culture, and violence against women (Feminism: The Fourth Wave, n.d.). Fourth wave feminism focused on the women issues that happened on the street, workplace, and campus, including the harassment, abuse, and murder of women.

The examples of fourth-wave feminism are 10 Hours of Walking in NYC as a Woman, 2017 Women's March, and #MeTooMovement.

As time goes on, feminist movements and ideologies have developed and represent different perspectives and objectives. It depends on the historical moment, culture, and country. Some forms of feminism are ethnically specific. Some have been criticized for being care only with white, middle-class, and college-educated females (Weedon, 2002).

One of the forms of feminism is black feminism. "Feminism is the political theory and practice to free all women: women of color, working-class women, as well as white economically privileged heterosexual women. Anything less than this is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement" (Smith & Thompson, 2002).

Black feminism evolved in connection with the second wave of the American women's movement in the late 1960s. Black women (the other third world and working women) have actually been involved in the feminist movement since its inception, but elitism within the movement has served to obscure the participation of black women. Early feminist movements that were led by white middle-class women had ignored oppression based on racism and classism. Thus, in 1973, Black feminists felt the necessity of forming a separate Black feminist group. This became the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) (Moraga & Anzaldua, 2015).

Another theory related to black feminism is womanism, which was developed by Alice Walker. It emerged after the early feminist movements that

were led specifically by white women, were largely white middle-class movements, and had generally ignored oppression based on racism and classism. Alice Walker and other womanists pointed out that black women experienced a different and more intense kind of oppression from that of white women (Walker, 1983).

C. Objectification Theory Proposed by Martha C Nussbaum

Objectification has become a common theme in contemporary feminist theory. It has been associated with the work of anti-pornography feminists Catharine MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkin, and Martha Nussbaum. The foundation of their views on objectification is influenced by Immanuel Kant's philosophy about objectification. MacKinnon and Dworkin, share Kant's own conception of objectification as involving a reduction from a person to a mere sexual instrument (Papadaki, 2007).

The term "objectification" is familiar in people's daily lives. It is commonly used to criticize advertisements, films, and other representations, and attitudes of one person to another, usually in the sexual realm. Objectification is a condition when a human being is regarded and /or treated as an object, in the context of a sexual relationship (Nussbaum, 1995). Treating things as the object is not objectification. Objectification only occurs when we entail making into a thing, treating "as" a thing, something that is not a thing. In her work titled *Objectification*, Nussbaum classified ways to treat a human being as an object or a

thing into seven. Objectification to treating a human being in one or more of these ways:

1. Instrumentality

It happens when the objectifier (person who does objectification) treats the object (that is not an object, but a human being) as a tool of his or her purposes.

2. Denial of autonomy

The objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination.

3. Inertness

The objectifier treats the object as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity. According to Amnesty International, agency means empowerment and is attributed to those who are no longer victims of violence. Robin Redhead particularly defines the term of women's agency. It means the ability of women to have rights in control over resources, such as women's ability to gain and manage income and to own, use, and dispose of material assets, the capability to move freely, to get freedom in deciding their movements and capable to move outside their homes.

Moreover, women are involved in making decisions in the family formation, including the ability to decide when and whom to marry, when and how many children to have, and when to leave a marriage. Women are also free from the risk of violence, by not getting the prevalence of domestic violence and other forms of sexual, physical, or emotional

violence. Finally, women are capable to have a voice in society and influence policy. It is measured by participation and representation in formal politics and engagement in collective action and associations (Redhead, 2007).

4. Fungibility

The objectifier treats the object as interchangeable; with other objects of the same type, and/or with objects of other types.

5. Violability

The objectifier treats the object as lacking in boundary- integrity, as something that it is permissible to break up, smash, and break into.

6. Ownership

The objectifier treats the object as something that is owned by another, can be bought or sold, and so on.

7. Denial of subjectivity

The objectifier treats the object as something whose experience and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account (Nussbaum, 1995).

Immanuel Kant, Dworkin, and MacKinnon shared a similar concept about objectification. Kant's core idea is the study of sexuality and marriage. He said that sexual desire is a very powerful force that leads to treatment of people not as them, themselves, but as means or tools for the satisfaction of other people's desires. MacKinnon and Dworkin in a way follow Kant. They start from the idea that all human beings are owed respect, and that this respect is incompatible with

treating them as instruments, and also with denials of autonomy and subjectivity. These statements are similar to the Kantian idea. These are three notions define the Kantian idea regarding forms of objectification:

1. Instrumentalization

One treats another as a tool to satisfy his desire. A person becomes an “object of appetite” for another person, all motives of moral relationship cease to function because as an “object of appetite” for another, a person becomes a thing and can be treated and used. One cannot manage to see the other person as anything but a device or instrument of one’s interests, a collection of body parts that are useful tools for one’s pleasure, and the powerful urge to secure one’s sexual satisfaction.

2. Denial of autonomy

One wishes to dictate how the other person is going to behave, in order to secure one’s satisfaction.

3. Denial of subjectivity

One stops worrying the others, including stop asking how the other person is thinking or feeling, bent on securing one’s satisfaction (Nussbaum, 1995).

D. Objectification Theory by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts

Objectification theory is proposed by Barbara Fredrickson from the University of Michigan and Tomi-Ann Roberts from Colorado College. This theoretical framework published by Cambridge University Press in 1997 entitled

Objectification Theory: Toward Understanding Women's Lived Experiences and Mental Health Risks. This theoretical framework of objectification explains the experiential consequences of being female in a culture that sexually objectifies the female body. Objectification theory aims to theorize about sexual objectification and educate it to all women. Bodies are built through socio-cultural contexts and constructed through socio-cultural practices and discourses. The key point of this theoretical framework is illustrating the lived experiences and mental health risks of girls and women who endure sexual objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Sexual objectification is one form of gender oppression, it leads into (and perhaps enables) women's oppression, ranging from discrimination in the terms of employment and sexual violence to the trivialization of women's work and accomplishments. The common theme running through all forms of sexual objectification is the experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) which is primarily valued for its use to (or consumption by) others. In spite of the fact that feminists have long distinguished objectifying treatment as harmful to women, the micro-level components of this harm have rarely been specified (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

The basis distinction of the sexes is the body. The body has most often been explored in terms of its anatomical, genetic, or hormonal, but in fact, people tend to focus the gender differences with the different social status and power held by women and men in society. In doing so, the body is constructed from more than just biology. It exists within the sociocultural practice. Objectification theory

is the effort to name one set of socio-cultural barriers that decrease women's well-being and limit their potential (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Sexual objectification occurs whenever a woman's body, body parts, or sexual functions are separated from the person, reduced to the status of insignificant instruments, or regarded as if they were capable of representing her (Bartky, 1990). In other words, when being objectified, women are treated as bodies that exist for the use and pleasure of others.

Experience of sexual objectification in each woman can be different in various degree and kind. The response to sexual objectification is also different. Some can resist and weaken the cultural practices of objectification in their own lives, but some are not. It is influenced by particular combinations of factor that are listed below:

1. Ethnicity

According to Gardner (1980) and Allen (1984), men's gaze toward women is often accompanied by sexually evaluative commentary and tends to be derogatory when it is uttered to women of color. Cowan (1995), Leidholdt (1981), and Root (1995) explained it further, for women of color, objectifying images are often affected by racial stereotypes: African American women, for instance, are commonly depicted not only as objects but also as animals though Asian American women are depicted as possessing more exotic and subservient sexuality. Zuckerman & Kieffer (1994) stated that more recent studies have found that it is also present in portrayals of Whites versus Blacks, with Black women

represented in print media with the least facial prominence of all groups (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

2. Class

Women in a lower class have a bigger potential to experience objectification because they usually experience unfair treatment from the higher class but unfortunately do not have enough power to resist. Kaschak (1992) stated that few women can completely avoid potentially objectifying contexts because that is not under their control (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997).

3. Age

As Karen Homey stated decades ago; “The socially sanctioned right of all males to sexualize all females, regardless of age or status” (Westkott, 1986; Schur, 1983). We live in a society that women and their bodies are always potentially looked at and evaluated. Women’s bodies are separated out from the person, presented as objectifying gaze that exists for the use, consumption, and pleasure of others. Moreover, women are dictated on how to become and create beauty standards. Whoever is not measuring the standard will not be approved as part of society.

4. Sexuality

Buss (1989) and Singh (1993) have ventured to explain that sexual objectification is related to male heterosexuality. Women’s physical attractiveness signals reproductive value so that women’s physical evaluation becomes an important criterion in men’s mate selection. Connel (1987), Kuhn (1985), and Stoltenberg (1989) argue that this cultural practice contributed to female

objectification in order to create, maintain, and express patriarchy (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Hall (1984) states, studies have shown that women are looked at and gazed more than men. Gardner (1980) said that men's gaze toward women is often accompanied by sexually evaluative commentary, which according to Allen (1984), tends to be most derogatory when aimed at women of color (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Moreover, Henley (1977) has pointed out that our language has specific verbs to connote men's staring at women's bodies, such as "ogle" and "leer," underscoring that not only sexualized gazing occurs, but also that it is disquieting for women.

Objectifying images are also happened in visual media. Males are pictured looking directly at their female partners far more frequently than the other way around. For example, the common pose in advertising is that male is depicted gazing or staring a female who is looking off into the distance, daydreaming, or otherwise mentally drifting from the scene (Goffman, 1979; Umiker-Sebeok, 1981). Moreover, whereas men tend to be portrayed in print media and artwork with an emphasis on the head and face, and with a greater focus on facial detail, women tend to be portrayed with an emphasis on the body.

Through a metaphor, Mackinnon states that "All women live in sexual objectification the way fish live in water". It means that objectification not only surrounds women but also becomes the source of nourishment and sustenance they derive from. However, women are not fish, and objectification is bad because

it cuts women off from full self-expression and self-determination and their humanity.

5. Other physical and personal characteristics



CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Form of Objectification Portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*

Objectification now has become familiar in our daily lives. It is commonly used to criticize or express skepticism about the attitudes of one person to another. This term of objectification is usually used, though not always, in the sexual realm. Thus, the use of objectification is often related to pornography. Catharine Mackinnon (1987) ones postulated about pornography in *Feminism Unmodified*, "Admiration of natural physical beauty becomes objectification. Harmlessness becomes harm." (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 249)

According to Martha C Nussbaum, objectification is the seeing and/or treating of what is not really an object, what is, in fact, a human being, as an object (Nussbaum, 1995). There are seven notions involved in the idea of treating someone as an object. Objectification is to treat a human being in one or more of these ways. Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* portrayed at least six of them.

1. Instrumentality

Instrumentality is regarding a person as a tool for other people's purposes (Nussbaum, 1995). *Venus* was dealt with instrumentality because she was used for other people's purposes many times. The first is by The Man and The Brother, the second is by The Mother Showman, the third is by society and the audience of the exhibition, and the fourth is by Baron Docteur and other anatomists. *Venus*

was used for money purposes, for sexual purposes, for scientific purposes, and object of gratitude.

Firstly, Venus became a tool to make money. At the beginning of the play, The Brother and The Man were talking about making a mint through an exhibition in England. They need a girl to dance in this exhibition. Then, they choose Venus who was apparently brushing the floor in front of them at that time. Thus, they decided to name the exhibition, “The African Dancing Princess”.

The Man: You need a girl. Wholl go all that way to be a dancer?

The Brother: Finding the girls the easy part.

(Rest)

That girl for instance.

Shes good. Vigorous and meticulous (Parks, 2017, p. 11).

After the dialogue above, they called Venus to be examined. They also asked Venus to dance in front of them. Then, they decided to bring Venus to England, promised her to be a rich and popular dancer. Unfortunately, soon after she arrived in England, she was sold as a “Big Bottomed Girl” to The Mother-Showman, the owner of the exhibition.

Venus was also used to make a mint by The Mother-Showman. The Mother-Showman is the owner of the exhibition. She displayed Venus together with the other 8 Human Wonders. She called them the ugliest creatures in God’s creativity to make people curious and come to the exhibition. When people came, she took pennies of each who came. Day by day, The Mother-Showman exhibited them from town to town and made money from that. The exhibition is successful and brings so much money. The Mother-Showman made Venus as the main attraction of an exhibition that obviously makes her more struggling than the other

Human Wonders. Unfortunately, The Mother-Showman did not fairly share the money with Venus. She did not give Venus the proper clothes. She did not provide the private room that can make Venus feeling safe. Venus' room was unlocked and people from the outside can enter the room any time. When Baron Docteur tried to buy Venus, The Mother-Showman said, "Shes (read: Venus) my prize" (Parks, 2017, p. 82) and she did not want to sell her because Venus was her money machine.

Secondly, Venus was used for sexual purposes. The Brother who brought Venus to England used Venus to fulfill his desire. He sees Venus as an object of sexual desire. After groping and kissing Venus, The Brother left Venus and sold her to The Mother-Showman. Thus, The Brother only used Venus to fulfill his own satisfaction.

*The Brother: Tomorrow I'll buy you the town.
For now lift up your skirt.
There. That's good.
She lifts her skirts showing her ass. He gropes her.
The Girl: I don't—
The Brother: Relax.
Presenting "The African Dancing Princess!" (Parks, 2017, p. 23)*

*They kiss and touch each other.
He is more amorous than she (Parks, 2017, p. 24).*

Other people who also used Venus as an object of sexual desire is the society and the audience of the exhibition. Many people came to the exhibition. Most are men. They came and paid to see her naked. Sometimes, they touched her and felt her. People also entered Venus' unlocked room so that Venus became the tool to satisfy other people's sexual desires. The quotations below are showing us the evidence.

The Mother-Showman: Go on Sir, go on.

*Feel her if you like.
He takes a feel. He wanders off (Parks, 2017, p. 45).*

*Mr. Hall, Member of Society: I saw her, oh several times.
Call me and my Mrs. Her regulars. She was always
standing on a stage, 2 feet high, clothed in a light dress,
a dress thuh color of her own skin.
She looked, well, naked, kin I say that? (Parks, 2017, p. 68)*

*The Mother Showman: Don't push me. Sweetie.
Next doors a smoky pub
full of drunken men.
I just may invite them in
one at a time
and let them fuck yr brains out.
The Venus: They do it anyway.
They come in drunken when yr sleeping. (Parks, 2017, p. 56-57)*

Bought by Baron Docteur for scientific purposes, did not end Venus' misery. Venus was still become an object to satisfy other people's desire. Baron Docteur made her become his sex partner and made her sleep with him in his room. Every day, they sleep together until she was pregnant, twice. "She's pregnant" (Parks, 2017, p. 128). "She's pregnant again" (Parks, 2017, p. 138). One time, Venus and Baron Docteur were talking in bed. While he was looking at Venus, Baron Docteur was masturbating.

*The Baron Docteur: Don't look! Don't look at me.
Look off
somewhere.
Eat yr chockluts
eat em slow
that's it.
Touch yrself.
Good.
Good.
He's masturbating. He has his back to her. He sneaks little looks at her over his
shoulder.
He cums (Parks, 2017, p. 106).*

The term 'chockluts' can be referred to female genital. People are used to teaching their daughter to mention dessert names to refer to the female genital. For example, pie, ice cream, strawberry, and so on. It becomes generally

unconscious metaphor in English equating women as a sex object with desserts. It reduces women's status into an object with the implications of powerless, edible, and enjoyable.

Moreover, at the end of the play, there is a glossary of chocolates. The lists of the chocolate are mostly dark chocolate which is typical of Venus' physical appearance. The example is *Capezzoli di Venere*. It also called the nipples of Venus, breast-shaped mounds in dark or light chocolate with a red or white iced nipple on top. Another example is *Enfant de Bruxelles* which is a dark chocolate lozenge with an image of a little African child stamped upon it. Furthermore, there is a dialogue when Venus was given some chocolates by Baron Docteur, Venus said, "Do you think I look like one of these little chocolate Brussels infants?" (Parks, 2017, p.105). Thus, when Baron Docteur said, "Eat yr chockluts,... Touch yourself..." It means that he asked Venus to touch her genital and her body so that Baron Docteur can enjoy fulfilling his desire by seeing Venus' sexual activity.

At the academy, Venus was being examined over and over by the anatomists. "The Baron Docteur: Y r seen enough at the Academy (Parks, 2017, p. 126)." She wore light clothes to ease the measurement. Sometimes, at the academies, she felt that the anatomists are too much in doing their job. She knew that it was not good and she was uncomfortable with that situation, but she could not avoid the indecency done by the anatomists. Then, she told Baron Docteur about it.

*The Venus: They touch me sometimes.
When yr not looking.
The Venus: Theyre lascivious (Parks, 2017, p. 137).*

Thirdly, Venus was used for scientific purposes. The scientists attempted to compare her with the missing link so that she was been examined until her death. The anatomists draw and wrote every inch of her body. They were trying to be accurate in measurement to make sure if it is the missing link they have been searched. The play was filled with so many medical terms.

*The Venus stands in reverse profile.
The Chorus of the 8 Anatomists draws busily.
The Baron Docteur stands apart.
The Baron Docteur: Gentlemen! Time to practice measurements!
The Chorus of the 8 Anatomists measures The Venus.
The Baron Docteur stands apart.
The Baron Docteur: From thuh vertex to thuh chin:
The Chorus of the 8 Anatomists: 8.0 inches.
The Baron Docteur: Vertex to
the top of shoulder in inches:
The Chorus of the 8 Anatomists: 9.0 (parks, 2017, p. 113-115).*

Moreover, Venus' physical appearance makes the scientists interested in her. Her big buttocks attracted the scientists to examine her further. The quotations below are showing us that the scientists wanted to dissect Venus.

*The Grade-School Chum: You better dissect her soon, Old Friend,
the Academy wont wait for ever (Parks, 2017, p. 131)*

When Venus was in jail, The Grade-School Chum, one of the scientists came and talked to the Venus' guard. The guard was the resurrectionist. The Grade-School Chum asked The Negro Resurrectionist to dig up the ground and unearth Venus' body. He told The Negro Resurrectionist that he need Venus' corpse for scientific purposes. Soon after Venus' death, the scientists really dissected her genitals and put them on display in Musee de l'Homme in Paris until 1985 (Henderson, 2014).

The quotations below are showing us the evidence.

*The Grade-School Chum: A friend of mine in the medical profession
is very interested in the body of yr ward.
After she "goes on."
For scientific analysis only of course (Parks, 2017, p. 151).*

The Venus: Loves corpse stands on show in museum. Please visit (Parks, 2017, p. 161).

Baron Docteur used Venus for his personal purpose that is related to science. One time, when Baron Docteur and Venus enjoy their time together, Baron Docteur said that he has a dream to be a great doctor. He wanted to be a great scientist who discovered the great thing. Thus, he wanted to examine Venus as his attempt to reveal that Venus is a unique creature, a missing link that had been searched by the scientists over the years.

The Baron Docteur: You know what I want more than anything?...

*... The Baron Docteur: Most great minds discover something.
I've had ideas for things but
my ideas r—
(You wouldn't understand em anyway.)...*

*...The Baron Docteur: In you, Sweetheart, I've met my opposite-exact.
Now if I could only match you...*

*...The Baron Docteur: Known. Like you!
Only, of course, in my specific circle. (Parks, 2017, p. 103-104)*

Fourthly, Venus was used as an object to increase people's gratitude. As a human being that always has the desire to stand out from others, people always try to increase their self-esteem. Frequently, they are looking for other people lower than them to make it easier. In this case, Venus as black female life among white society obviously looks different. Thus, the white people considered it as a bizarre thing and misfortune. Then, they saw Venus as the lower class and begin to see her as an object to increase their gratitude.

*The Mother Showman: Ladies and Gents are you feeling lowly?
Downs in the dumps?*

*Perhaps yr feelin that yr life is all for naught? Ive felt that way myself at times.
Come on inside and get yr spirit lifted.
One look at thisll make you feel like a King! (Parks, 2017, p. 45)*

*The Mother-Showman: ...Step inside come on come see
The most lowly and unfortunate beings in Gods Universe... (Parks, 2017, p. 30).*

The Mother-Showman: ...the ugliest creature in creativity... (Parks, 2017, p. 31).

From the quotation above, The Mother-Showman tried to drive people's opinions about Venus. She made Venus look like an unfortunate human being because of her different looks. Venus and her characteristics as a girl who has black skin and a big buttock were used to elicit a high emotional response from the audience. Her differences that considered as a misfortune can elicit people's pleasure and pride because they can feel better about their personal identity and self-worth. Thus, white people saw Venus as an object of gratitude that can increase their gratitude, pride, and spirits.

2. Denial of Autonomy

This occurs when a person was treated as lacking of autonomy and self-determination. One wishes to dictate how the other person will behave, to secure one's satisfaction (Nussbaum, 1995). In this play, Venus was many times had no freedom to control her own life and being dictated by others. It is shown since Venus became a slave. The Brother asked Venus to dance and Venus did it. When The Brother asked Venus to stop, Venus definitely did it. It shows that Venus can be controlled by others. Moreover, Venus was asked to lift her skirt, "For now, lift up yr skirt" (Parks, 2017, p. 23), and she did not refuse it, "She lifts her skirts showing her ass" (Parks, 2017, p. 23).

The Brother: Dance.
The Girl: Dance?
The Brother: Dance! Come on!
I'll clap time.
The Brother claps time.
The Girl dances
The Brother: Stop Dancing. Stop!
The Girl: Stopped (Parks, 2017, p. 13-15).

Venus was also dictated by The Mother-Showman for her own purposes. The Mother-Showman was the one who owned the exhibition. She assumed that Venus is hers and she could control her. One time they argued about payment. Venus insisted that she might have been paid bigger than others since she was the main attraction in the exhibition. However, The Mother-Showman won't hear her. Then, Venus said that she will out of The Mother-Showman place and set up her own place, but again she could not go because she needs The Mother-Showman to depend on. She has no freedom to determine her choice.

The Venus: Im out of here.
I'll make my own mark.
Im all decided.
The Mother-Showman: You could be arrested. You need Mothers protection
(Parks, 2017, p. 55-56).

Another person who dictated Venus was Baron Docteur. In this play, Venus was depicted as a girl who admired Baron Docteur so much. Baron Docteur can easily make her do many things. They sleep together in Baron Docteur's room until Venus pregnant. "She's pregnant" (Parks, 2017, p. 128). When Venus told Baron Docteur about her pregnancy, Baron Docteur was surprised. He did not want babies from Venus because he worries about his wife, his career, and his reputation. Then, he asked Venus to do something about it. The quotation below will show how Baron Docteur and Venus faced the problem.

The Baron Docteru: God. Is there anything we can do about it.
Ive a wife. A career.

*A reputation. Is there anything we can do about it we together in
 The privacy of my office.
 Ive got various equipments in here
 We could figure something out.
 Venus: Where I come from
 Its cause for celebration.
 The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do, Girl.
 The Venus: Yes (Parks, 2017, p. 128-129).*

“She’s pregnant again” (Parks, 2017, p. 138). Venus was pregnant before, and the play did not explain her give birth. How could she be pregnant again while she has not been giving birth? While at the dialogues, Baron Docteur forced Venus to do something with the baby. It indicates that Baron Docteur asked Venus to abort the baby. At Venus’ second pregnancy, Baron Docteur asked Venus to abort the baby again even though Venus looks like she would not. Venus was dictated by Baron Docteur.

*The Baron Docteur: Can we do anything? Oh God.
 Venus: Oh God.
 The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do.
 The Venus: Im not feeling very well.
 Its hot in here.
 Love me?
 The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do, Girl!
 The Venus: Yes. Yes.
 The Baron Docteur: Good. Now get some sleep (Parks, 2017, p. 138).*

From the quotation above, it is shown that Venus lost her self-determination and autonomy to control her body. She could not maintain what inside her body. Even though she tried to refuse, in the end, she will always do whatever Baron Docteur commands. Love makes her blind and dictated by others.

3. Inertness

Inertness is treating a person as lacking in agency and activity. In this play, Venus was undoubtedly lost her agency. According to Robin Redhead, women’s

agency is the ability of women to have rights in control over resources, such as women's ability to earn and control income and to own, use, and dispose of material assets, the capability to move freely, to get freedom in deciding their movements and capable to move outside their homes. Moreover, women are involved in making decisions in the family formation, including the ability to decide when and whom to marry, when and how many children to have, and when to leave a marriage. Women are also free from the risk of violence, by not getting the prevalence of domestic violence and other forms of sexual, physical, or emotional violence. Finally, women are capable to have a voice in society and influence policy. It is measured by participation and representation in formal politics and engagement in collective action and associations (Redhead, 2007).

In this play, Venus lost her agency many times. First is when she could not earn and control her income. It is because The Mother-Showman controlled the payment and she did not pay her fairly. Venus even did not have a chance to make a bargain about her payment.

*The Venus: I should get 50 uh week.
 Plus better food, uh lock on my door and uh dress now and then.
 The Mother-Showman: You should get some sleep, Girl.
 I wake you up early and you never like it.
 The Venus: 50 uh week good food locked door new clothes say it's a deal.
 The Mother-Showman: Go to hell.
 The Venus: 40 then, the clothes and my own room. Forget the food.
 The Mother-Showman: Nothin doin, Lovely.
 The Venus: 30.
 The Mother-Showman: Nope (Parks, 2017, p. 53-54).*

*The Venus: Im out of here.
 I'll make my own mark.
 Im all decided.
 The Mother-Showman: You could be arrested. You need Mothers protection
 (Parks, 2017, p. 55-56).*

Venus keeps uttering her needs, but The Mother-Showman keeps refusing her even though Venus decided to walk out. Venus was not allowed to have her own assets or move freely because she was always under The Mother-Showman's control. In the end, she did not get the money, the food, the clothes, and proper room. It is shown that Venus was not capable to make a decision over her life. It is because The Mother-Showman is regarding Venus as a weak and passive so she can take over her life.

At the exhibition, Venus was shown as a missing link that could not do anything, including reading, counting, and speaking. Her activity is limited by The Mother-Showman. At some moment, Venus offered herself to read a poem for the audience, but The Mother-Showman did not allow her and ignored her instead.

*The Venus: We should spruce up our act.
I could speak for them.
Say a little poem or something.
The Mother-Showman: Count!
The Venus: You could pretend to teach me and I would learn before their very eyes.
The Mother-Showman: Y r a Negro native with a most remarkable spanker.
That's what they pay for.
Their eyes are hot for yr tot-tot.
Theres the poetry.
The Venus: We should expand.
The Mother-Showman: Count! (Parks, 2017, p. 51)*

*The Mother-Showman: Can you count?
The Venus: I can count.
The Mother-Showman: That puts you a bit above the rest.
But that's our secret (Parks, 2017, p. 40).*

From the quotation above, we knew that Venus was exhibited as a missing link, the lowest human chain that was passive and dumb. During the exhibition, Venus was ordered to do everything The Mother-Showman asked. She moved backward and forwards, came out, and go into her cage, more like an animal on a

chain than a human being. Thus, The Mother-Showman limited her activity and keeps Venus' capability in secret so that Venus keeps looking like a dumb. That's the rule and could not be changed because everyone is paying for that. Venus could not walk out even though she wants because, in the end, she still needed The Mother-Showman to depend on.

Venus' activity was also limited by Baron Docteur. She was always locked in the room, not allowed to go nor allowed to be seen by others. Venus was allowed to communicate with Baron Docteur only. Without Baron Docteur, she could not go out. When it comes to going outside, she could only enjoy a small tour in a closed coach. She could not go freely. In conclusion, she was imprisoned.

*The Venus: Its always you and me.
You and me this room that table.
We dont go out.
No one visits.
You don't want me seen.
The Baron Docteur: Yr seen enough at the Academy.
The Venus: That don't count.
The Baron Docteur: We go for rides.
The Venus: In a closed coach! (Parks, 2017, p. 126).*

Venus was also lost her agency over her maternity. In the quotation below, it is depicted that Venus is pregnant, but the Baron Docteur insisted to abort the baby. Venus was trying to maintain the precious creature inside her. She was trying to guide the conversation in a different direction, but Baron Docteur keeps pushing her. In the end, Venus loose when she should maintain the baby inside her. Her agency is defeated by Baron Docteur.

*The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do, Girl.
The Venus: Yes (Parks, 2017, p.128-129).*

The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do.

*The Venus: Im not feeling very well.
 Its hot in here.
 Love me?
 The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do, Girl!
 The Venus: Yes. Yes.
 The Baron Docteur: Good. Now get some sleep (Parks, 2017, p.138).*

4. Fungibility

Fungibility is interchangeable. One is regarded as a thing that can be changed with other instruments. In this play, Venus was not dealt with fungibility. Some objects are precious objects, and these will usually lack of fungibility. Venus was regarded as a special creature called missing link so that her existence was not interchangeable.

5. Violability

Violability is treating a human being as a thing that is permissible to break up, to smash, and break into pieces. As Nussbaum said, “We will allow a child to break and destroy relatively few things in the house” (Nussbaum, 1995). Venus was many times experience violence during the exhibition. The Mother-Showman kicked her many times. The Mother-Showman assumed that as an act but it frequently becomes too much and hurt Venus. The Mother-Showman also allowed people to do whatever they want to observe Venus for the sake of solving their curiosity. Thus, there are many people pinch and poke Venus. It is depicted in the quotations below:

*The Mother-Showman: ... The very lowest rung on Our Lords Great Evolutionary Ladder! Observe: I kick her like I kick my dog!
 The Mother-Showman kicks The Venus repeatedly. The act has the feel of professional wrestling but also looks real (Parks, 2017, p.45).*

*The Venus: You hit me hard the other day.
 The Mother-Showman: Mothers sorry.*

*The Venus: We should spruce up our act.
I could speak for them.
Say a little poem or something (Parks, 2017, p.50-51).*

*Witness #2: ...She was surrounded by many persons, some females!
One pinched her, another walked round her;
One gentleman poked her with his cane;
Uh lady used her parasol to see if all was, as she called it, 'natural'.
Through all of this the creature didn't speak.
Maybe uh sigh or 2 maybe when she seemed inclined to protest the pawing...
(Parks, 2017,p.69).*

*The Baron Docteur: Ive watched you with her, woman.
You kick her like I kick my dog! (Parks, 2017, p.83).*

*The Grade-School Chum: So get rid of her!
Break with her!
Kick her out on her fat ass! (Parks, 2017, p. 131)*

The scientists even dissected Venus' body parts soon after her death. They regarded Venus as a thing that is permissible to break into pieces. They did not value Venus' life and only care about doing the research. Soon after her death, Venus was dissected and her genital was displayed in the museum. There are debates over the reasons of her death. Some said that she died because of cold weather, some said differently. "The Baron Docteur: I say she died of drink. The Negro Resurrectionist: It was the cold I think" (Parks, 2017, p. 160). From the historical notes, the scientists really dissected her genitals and put them on display in Musee de l'Homme in Paris until 1985 (Henderson, 2014).

*The Grade-School Chum: You better dissect her soon, Old Friend,
the Academy wont wait for ever (Parks, 2017, p. 131)*

*The Grade-School Chum: A friend of mine in the medical profession
is very interested in the body of yr ward.
After she "goes on."
For scientific analysis only of course (Parks, 2017, p. 151).*

The Venus: Loves corpse stands on show in museum. Please visit (Parks, 2017, p.161).

6. Ownership

When someone is owned by the others, he/she can be bought or sold. This form of objectification entails a denial of autonomy, and it also entails the use of the slave as a mere tool for the purposes of the owner. At the beginning of the play, Venus was depicted as a girl on hands and knees, was scrubbing and brushing the floor, just like a slave circa early 1800s in South Africa. Slavery is defined as a form of ownership. In this play, Venus was owned by The Man. As something that is owned by, Venus had to obey The Man as the consequence. When Venus was asked to be a dancer in England, Venus was confused at first. She said, “Do I have a choice? I’d like to think on it” (Parks, 2017,p.17). Even though she would think first, in the end, she knew her position and recognized that she had no choice. “I’d like to think on it” is just a simple talk to response. In the end, she just laughed and asked when to go as the agreement.

Further, Venus was handled by The Brother in England. Here, Venus was sold to The Mother-Showman. At their first meeting, The Mother-Showman said, “I’m yr new boss” (Parks, 2017, p.30). Thus, it makes Venus’ ownership was moving on The Mother-Showman.

Later, as his interest was bigger and bigger, Baron Docteur bought Venus from The Mother-Showman. It takes many times to deal because The Mother-Showman was very proud of Venus and insist to keep Venus in her guidance to make more money. However, Baron Docteur was a stubborn man. He offered the Mother-Showman more money while slightly intimidate her so that The Mother-Showman was finally let Venus go.

*The Baron Docteur: I've watched you with her, woman.
 You kick her like I kick my dog!
 The Mother-Showman: We seem to have an understanding.
 The Baron Docteur: How much.
 The Mother-Showman: A lot.
 The Baron Docteur: Ok.
 The Mother Showman: A ton.
 The Baron Docteur: Alright.
 The Mother-Showman: A mint!
 A fortune!
 Fort Knox!
 The Baron Docteur: Here here take it take it (Parks, 2017, p.83).*

Baron Docteur has bought Venus from The Mother-Showman. "I've paid yr Mother off" (Parks, 2017, p.87). Owned by Baron Docteur means that Venus now had to obey Baron Docteur's rule and do whatever he wants. Baron Docteur might not seem as cruel as The Mother-Showman. He dressed clean and tidy. He persuaded Venus with his gentle words. He was deceit. Venus became his sex slave, "The Baron Docteur: Yll sleep with me. Say 'yes'" (Parks, 2017, p.88); and the object of his research.

7. Denial of subjectivity

Denial of subjectivity is a way to objectify a person through not taking someone's experience and feeling into account. One stops asking how the other person is thinking or feeling, bent on securing one's own satisfaction (Nussbaum, 1995). In this play, Venus' experience and the feeling were ignored many times. Her need and her opinion were not important for others. Venus was used by The Mother-Showman for her own-purposes but her need was not given to her. She even attempted to ask for food, clothes, and a private room for herself but instead of giving her what she wanted, The Mother-Showman ignored her and even threatened her.

*The Mother-Showman: Dont push me, Sweetie.
Next doors a smoky pub
full of drunken men.
I just may invite them in
one at a time
and let them fuck yr brains out (Parks, 2017, p.56)*

Everyone is busy thinking about how Venus act, how Venus did this and that, how Venus looks like, but no one looking into her heart. No one's asking about how she's feeling. Venus was crying because of the bad treatment she faced but no one care about it.

*The Negro Resurrectionist: Footnote #5:
Historical Extract. Category: Literary. From The Life of One Called the Venus
Hottentot As Told By Herself"
(Rest)
"The things they noticed were quite various
But no one ever noticed her face was streamed with tears." (Parks, 2017, p.47).*

At the Academy, when Venus was handled by Baron Docteur, Venus' feeling also ignored many times. Venus told Baron Docteur that people in the Academy touched her and it feels wrong for her, but Baron Docteur answered it lightly, said that it is common for them because that is their work.

*The Venus: They touch me sometimes.
When yr not looking.
The Baron Docteur: How could they not?
Touching you is—well, its their job.
The Venus: Theyre lascivious.
The Baron Docteur: Jesus.
Don't be hyperbolic (Parks, 2017, p.137).*

In this play, Venus was depicted as a one-sided lover. She loved Baron Docteur and appreciated their relationship so much but it could not be continued because Baron Docteur had already had a wife. He also worried about her career and her image if everyone knew he had a relationship with Venus. After a long time together, he did not care about Venus' feeling at all.

The Baron Docteur: You cant stay here forever you know.

The Baron Docteur: I've got a wife. You've got a homeland and a family back there.

The Venus: I don't wanna go back inny more... (Parks, 2017, p.105).

When Venus was pregnant, Baron Docteur forced Venus to abort their baby because he worried about his career and his wife. He did not care about Venus' feeling. Venus many times asked if Baron Docteur loved her too, "Love me?" (Parks, 2017, p.106;107;114;137;138). Baron Docteur always said yes but in the end, he rejected Venus' will to stay with him. Baron Docteur did not try to keep her and kick her like a pet to a jail.

She's pregnant.

The Baron Docteur: God. Is there anything we can do about it.

I've a wife. A career.

A reputation. Is there anything we can do about it we together in

The privacy of my office.

I've got various equipments in here

We could figure something out.

Venus: Where I come from

Its cause for celebration.

The Baron Docteur: A simple yes or no will do, Girl.

The Venus: Yes (Parks, 2017, p.128-129).

The following quotation is a bargain between Baron Docteur and the Grade-School Chum. Baron Docteur was finally agreed to Grade School Chum's advice to dump Venus away. They did not care about Venus' feeling at all. They did not consider Venus' will to stay by Baron Docteur's side. They even tried to find an excuse to kick Venus into jail. In the end, Baron Docteur left Venus alone, cast away their feelings, kicked Venus out into jail, and charges her as being indecency.

The Grade-School Chum: "Indecency!"

We could clap her into jail for that.

The Baron Docteur: We could?

The Grade-School Chum: Its up to you of course.

(Rest)

Remember who you are, Sir,

And make the right decision.

Say yes and we'll have her gone by morning.

The Baron Docteur: There must be some other solution.
The Grade-School Chum: We'll clap her into jail.
And if her clap runs its course, well,
That's fate, Friend.
The Baron Docteur: Oh God
The Grade-School Chum: A simple yes or no will do, Doctor.
Come on.
The Baron Docteur: Such a lovely creature in her way.
She has a grace—
The Grade-School Chum: Come on.
Say yes.
Before she wakes.
The Baron Docteur: Her charming hands—
The Grade-School Chum: Shes just a 2-bit sideshow freak.
The Baron Docteur: She would have made uh splendid wife.
The Grade-School Chum: Oh, please.
She'll make uh splendid corpse.
The Grade-School Chum exits leading
The Baron Docteur by the hand.
The Venus wakes up with a start. She is alone (Parks, 2017,p.143-144).

B. Factors that Galvanize Objectification Portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' Venus

Venus

Sexual objectification is a form of gender oppression. Objectification is a factor that can provoke problems for women, ranging from employment discrimination and sexual violence to the trivialization of women's work and accomplishments. Objectification does not happen in the same way for each person. The experience and respond to the objectification can be different. Unique combinations of ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and other physical and personal attributes can become the factors that create unique sets of experience of objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Objectification portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* galvanized by some factors:

1. Sexuality

The first factor is sexuality. Buss (1989) and Singh (1993) have ventured to explain that sexual objectification is related to male heterosexuality. Women's physical attractiveness signals reproductive value so that women's physical evaluation becomes an important criterion in men's mate selection. Connel (1987), Kuhn (1985), and Stoltenberg (1989) argue that the cultural practice contributed to female objectification in order to create, maintain, and express patriarchy (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

As Karen Homey stated decades ago; "The socially sanctioned right of all males to sexualize all females, regardless of age or status" (Westkott, 1986, p. 95; see also Schur, 1983). We live in a society that women and their bodies are always potentially looked at and evaluated. Women's bodies are separated out from the person, presented as objectifying gaze that exists for the use, consumption, and pleasure of others. Moreover, women are dictated on how to become and create beauty standards. Whoever is not measuring the standard will not be approved as part of society.

Hall (1984) states, studies have shown that women are looked at and gazed more than men. Gardner (1980) said that men's gaze toward women is often accompanied by sexually evaluative commentary, which according to Allen (1984), tends to be most derogatory when aimed at women of color (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Venus, as portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*, is a woman. Being a woman is the first and significant factor that galvanized her objectification. As a woman, she was very attractive. As a naked woman being exhibited, she became more attractive that people would come and paid to see her.

...Venus, Black Goddess, was shameless, she sinned or else completely unknowing of r godfearin ways she stood totally naked in her iron cage (Parks, 2017,p.5).

She stood showing her ass off in her iron cage (Parks, 2017,p.161).

Through a metaphor, Mackinnon states that “All women live in sexual objectification the way fish live in water”. It means that objectification not only surrounds women but also becomes the source of nourishment and sustenance they derive from. However, women are not fish, and objectification is bad because it cuts women off from full self-expression and self-determination and their humanity (Fredrickson & Robert, 1997).

2. Class

The second factor is the class. Venus was depicted as a lower-class woman. She is an African slave. She had experienced the suffering of poverty. Thus, when The Man and The Brother offered her to be a dancer and promised the material gain, she was agreed. She wanted to be rich. By this promises that she believed can make her rich, she goes to England. Unfortunately, this is only empty promises and ends with a more miserable life because she had to suffer the objectification by people around her. As a person in the lower class, she tended to be treated badly and the struggle of being objectified is even harder because she has not enough power to resist.

*Id come back rich!...
 ...I would have a house.
 I would hire help.
 I would be rich. Very rich.
 Big bags of money! (Parks, 2017,p.17).*

Poverty makes Venus willing to do anything. She was so sick to live in poverty. Thus, when she was at the exhibition with The Mother-Showman, all she could do is only follow The Mother-Showman's instructions. She had ever wanted to go out of the exhibition but end up being there again because she knew that it will be useless since she was not yet rich. The same thing happened when Venus was brought to the court because society protested her for being indecent and make a bad mark for the country. They wanted to send Venus back to her country, but Venus refused it because she thought that it will be a disgrace since she was not yet rich.

The Mother-Showman: But yr not yet rich and famous... ...Go back home and folks will laugh (Parks, 2017,p.54).

The Venus: After all Ive gone through so far to go home penniless would be disgraceful.

The Chorus of the Court: Is poverty more disgraceful than nakedness? (Parks, 2017,p. 75).

When she lived with Baron Docteur, she dreamed about marrying Baron Docteur. She knew that Baron Docteur had had a wife but she did it anyway. She did not want to be poor anymore so she did whatever Baron Docteur asked. Becoming a rich person and wife of a doctor would take her for granted. People will appreciate her. Her life will be well and serve with many servants (Parks, 2017, p.135-136). That's a lower class' dream. Thus, Venus tended to be obedient and willing to do anything. Venus' daydream of having a stable life and appreciate by others is represented as the following dialogue:

The Venus: ...The Docteur will introduce me to the Napoleon himself: Oh, yes yr Royal Highness the Negro question does keep me awake at night oh yes it does.

Servant girl! Do this and that!

When Im Mistress I'll be a tough cookie.

I'll rule the house with an iron fist and have the most fabulous parties.

Society will seek me out: Wheres Venus? Right here!

*Hhhhh. I need a wig.
 Every afternoon I'll take a 3 hour bath. In hot rosewater.
 After my bath they'll pat me down.
 They'll rub my body with the most expensive oils
 perfume my big buttocks and sprinkle them with gold dust! (Parks, 2017, p. 135)*

In conclusion, being a lower-class means living in a circle that has no end.

You are tired of being poor. Then, you try to change your life but it is obviously hard to even crawl up. People in the higher class will treat you badly because you are lower than them. You have not enough power to resist and they are successful to make you stuck or even push her down. The same thing happened to Venus. She came to England with the promises of being success, to have a better life. She put her best effort to change her life. She made money and tried to be a higher class, but unfortunately, until she dies, she was never being rich.

3. Ethnicity

The third factor is ethnicity. Setting in Southern Africa early 1800s, Venus was depicted as a black girl. Blacks are often forced to pay to the “race issue”. Racial issues and gendered otherness are often related as a significant factor to present domination, violation, and exploitation of women (Young, 1997). As a black female, Venus is inferior of the inferior. She has the possibility to be dominated and exploited by the black men, by the white women, and by the white men.

Moreover, Cowan (1995) and Leidholt (1981) said that objectifying toward women of color often infused with racial stereotypes: African American women, for example, are commonly portrayed not only as objects but also as animals. The same thing happened in Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus*. Venus was many

times paired with animal terms and treated as animals such as the following quotations:

Not caged but chained like a dog in the yard (Parks, 2017, p. 146)

*The Mother-Showman: THE VENUS HOTTENTOT
THE ONLY LIVING CREATURE OF HER KIND IN THE WORLD
STEPSISTER-MONKEY TO THE GREAT VENAL
LOVE
GODDESS... (Parks, 2017, p.35.)*

*The Mother-Showman: ...The very lowest rung on Our Lords Great
Evolutionary Ladder!*

Observe: I kick her like I kick my dog!

*The Mother-Showman kicks The Venus repeatedly. The act has the feel of
professional wrestling but also looks real (Parks, 2017, p.45).*

*The Baron Docteur: ("Another year has passed since I first wrote.
And although you've not married yr pet Hottentot and play a good part with yr
dear wife...") (Parks, 2017,p.117).*

The last quotation is a letter from Baron Docteur's friend, The Grade School-Chum. He wrote a letter to Baron Docteur about her pet, Hottentot. The pet, Hottentot here referred to Venus. The Grade-School Chum called Venus pet because Baron Docteur treated Venus like his pet who was caged in a room and did whatever Baron Docteur asked, just like a dog do tricks as their owner's instructions. This is irony since Venus was treated as lacking in autonomy and agency so that all she could do is only Baron Docteur's instructions.

According to Gardner (1980), men's gaze toward women is often accompanied by a sexually evaluative commentary. For women of color, Allen (1984) said that the commentary tends to be derogatory aim (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The Grade-School Chum was many times made bad commentary about Venus. He called Venus "the Thing" as if Venus was not kind of a human being. "Send the Thing back where she came from" (Parks, 2017, p.113). He also

made bad commentary about Venus, considering Venus restricted to a sideshow freak that was not that great and has nothing to be proud of.

*The Grade-School Chum: Get rid of her.
Shes not yr type (Parks, 2017, p. 130).*

The Grade-School Chum: What so great about the black girl tell me (Parks, 2017, p. 141).

The Grade-School Chum: Shes just a 2-bit sideshow freak (Parks, 2017, p. 144).

Objectification toward Venus is worse because she is black. Black people are regarded as the lowest chain of the human-being. As The Mother-Showman said that Venus is the stepsister-monkey (Parks, 2017, p.35) and the missing link (Parks, 2017, p.42). The blackness of African people is called “freaks”, “oddities”, and “curiosities”. Since Venus is black, she obviously became the “other” among white society. They see her as a separate lower race, a powerless primitive so that they can dominate and exploit her through slavery, for instance. Even the scientists were interested in her and attempted to examine her body. They attempted to compare her as a female of the lowest human species to the highest ape, orangutan (Young, 1997). This so-called scientific attempt is also under the gaze of white supremacy that set the stage for anatomical studies on a black woman.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After analyzing Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* using objectification theory, the researcher finally comes up with the last chapter of this research. In this chapter, the researcher is going to sum up the ideas which have been discussed in the previous chapter. Besides, the researcher is going to give suggestions for the readers, especially for the next researcher who will conduct the research which is related to this research.

A. Conclusion

Venus is a play written by Suzan-Lori Parks. This is a pseudo-historical drama which tends to reconstruct the history and blend it with the creativity of the writer. It might be similar to the history at a glance, but not strongly accurate. This play portrayed the miserable life of Saartjie/ Sarah Baartman/ Venus Hottentot in England. Venus is an African girl who lives in a white society. As a black female, she, unfortunately, suffered objectification from people around her.

Objectification is a form of gender oppression. It is a factor that can lead into problems for women, such as unfair treatment and payment, discrimination, sexual harassment, and violence. According to Martha C. Nussbaum, there are seven ways to treat a person as an object, namely; instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership, and denial of subjectivity. From these seven notions, Venus in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* dealt with at least six notions.

The first is instrumentality. Venus is used as a tool for other people's purposes such as money purposes, sexual purposes, scientific purposes, and object of gratitude. The second is the denial of autonomy. Venus was treated as lacking of autonomy and self-determination. She had no freedom to control her own life and being dictated by others to secure other people's satisfaction. The third is the inertness. Inertness is treating a person as lacking in agency and activity. In this play, Venus was undoubtedly lost her agency many times because she was regarded as weak and passive. The fourth is the violability. Violability is treating a human being as a thing that is permissible to break up, to smash, and break into pieces. As Nussbaum said, "We will allow a child to break and destroy relatively few things in the house" (Nussbaum, 1995). Venus experienced violence many times. She was being kicked, punched, and her genital was dissected by the scientists. The fifth is ownership. When someone is owned by the others, he/ she can be bought or sold. The sixth is the denial of subjectivity. It is a way to objectify a person through stops asking how the other person is thinking or feeling, bent on securing one's own satisfaction (Nussbaum, 1995). In this play, Venus' experience and the feeling were ignored many times. Her need and her opinion were not important for others.

Objectification does not happen in the same way for each person. The experience and respond to the objectification can be different. Unique combinations of ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and other physical and personal attributes can become the factors that create unique sets of experience of

objectification (Fredricksoon & Roberts, 1997). In Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*, the portrayal of objectification was galvanized by some factors.

The first factor is sexuality. We could not deny that we live in a society that somehow creates a cultural practice that degrades women's value and expresses patriarchy. Objectification is related to male heterosexuality in which women and their physical attractiveness are always potentially looked at and evaluated. Women's bodies are separated out from the person, presented as objectifying gaze that exists for the use, consumption, and pleasure of others. Venus, as portrayed in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*, is a woman. Being a woman is the first and significant factor that galvanized her objectification.

The second factor is the class. Venus was depicted as a lower-class woman. This factor galvanized the objectification toward Venus because as a lower class, Venus has not enough power to resist what happened to her. All she can do is just trying to survive from the bad treatment given by the higher class. She tried to crawl up changing her life, but there are so many difficulties in her way.

The third factor is ethnicity. Setting in Southern Africa early 1800s, Venus was depicted as a black girl. It makes the objectification toward Venus is even worse. Since Venus is black lived among white societies, she obviously became the "other" among white society. The blackness of African people is called "freaks", "oddities", and "curiosities". Black people are regarded as the lowest chain of the human-being, the stepsister-monkey, and missing-link. Even the scientists were interested in her and attempted to examine her body. They

attempted to compare her as a female of the lowest human species to the highest ape, orangutan (Young, 1997). This so-called scientific attempt is also under the gaze of white supremacy that set the stage for anatomical studies on a black woman. They see her as a separate lower race, a powerless primitive so that they can dominate and exploit her.

From the analysis above, we can learn that objectification is a leading cause of other women issues such as unfair payment, violence, and sexual harassment. It is because women's value is degraded into an object that can use for other people's purposes. However, some of the forms of objectification are too vague and less identifiable. The survivors might not realize what had happened. One day, they wake up and suddenly realize that they had no freedom but it's too late to do anything because their activity is already limited by others and it's already hard to escape.

B. Suggestions

Through this research, the researcher hopes that the reader can take good lessons and improve the reader's knowledge about objectification and its factors. The researcher also hopes that the reader's awareness of global women issues especially objectification is increased. Thus, any kind of objectification found in this play would not be applied in any part of this earth and be eliminated from this world. Moreover, the researcher expects that this research can be used as an additional reference and provide further references for the next researcher who is interesting in doing a similar field.

Due to the limitation, this research only focused on the form of objectification in the light of feminism and could not broadly explain about other related topics. Therefore, to enrich the development of literary criticism in Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus*, the researcher is going to give some suggestions for the next researcher. It is important to know that Suzan-Lori Parks' *Venus* is a literary work that is rich and could be analyzed through many points of view such as political, economic, social, culture, and psychology. There are many topics that worth to be discussed such as slavery, human trade, victim-blaming, and so on. Furthermore, the characters of the play are also interesting to be analyzed deeper because each role of the play has unique characteristics.

Besides, *Venus* is one of the numerous works that have written by Suzan-Lori Parks. Suzan-Lori Parks is one of the numerous writers that produced great works. There is obviously so much literary work that is waiting to be appreciated. One of the ways to appreciate the literary work is by analyzing it. It helps the writer to deliver their message to the reader. It can also help to improve the interpretation of the reader.

Last, the researcher realizes that literary criticism is not that easy and surely there might be several mistakes. Therefore, the researcher is waiting for the critics and suggestions from the readers so that the researcher can improve better research in the next opportunity.

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