

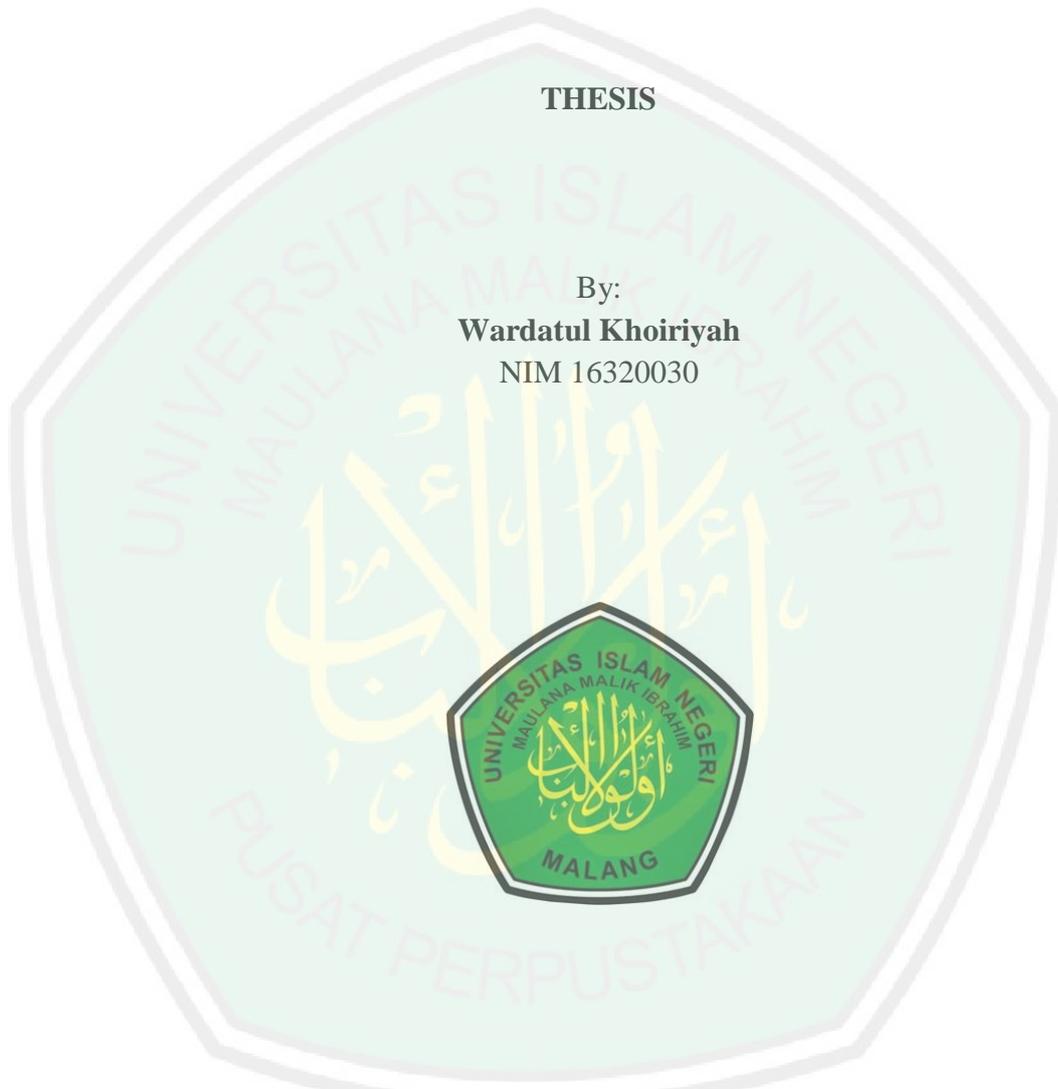
**THE PORTRAYAL OF SUBALTERN IN OODGEROO  
NOONUCCAL'S SELECTED POEMS**

**THESIS**

By:

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK  
IBRAHIM MALANG**

**2020**

**THE PORTRAYAL OF SUBALTERN IN OODGEROO  
NOONUCCAL'S SELECTED POEMS**

**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 “The Portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal’s Selected Poems” is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those ones that are cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 13 July 2020

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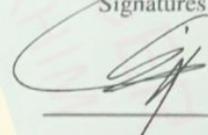
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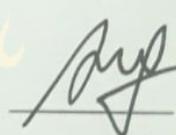
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## MOTTO

We have our own path in achieving the goals of life.

Don't rush, take your time, and do your best.

(Don't forget to pat your back and thank yourself for doing well!)



## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved mother and father,

My older sisters and brothers,

All of my family,

Thank you for keep supporting me.

I myself,

Wardatul Khoiriyah,

Thank you for doing your best,

Your journey is just beginning,

Stay strong and let's do the best!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher expresses her gratitude to the most merciful, Allah SWT, the God who has given me such power to finish this thesis entitled The Portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's Selected Poems. His mercy and peace upon the last Prophet Muhammad SAW who has guided us from the darkness to the lightness namely Islam.

Conducting and finishing this thesis is not something easy for the researcher. However, thanks to my close people who keep supporting me in my hardest times in the process of this thesis. In this occasion, the researcher would like to thank to:

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Wardatul Khoiriyah

## ABSTRACT

**Khoiriyah, Wardatul.** 2020. *The Portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's Selected Poems*. Thesis. Department of English Literature. Faculty of Humanities. Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

**Advisor** : Dr. Siti Masitoh, M.Hum.

**Keywords** : Subaltern, Aborigines

In this study, the researcher focuses on examining the portrayal of subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems. The issue of subaltern raised due to the oppression experienced by Aboriginal people as the effect of British colonization. It is portrayed in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. The three selected poems are interesting to be analyzed, since it clearly illustrate the predicaments of Aboriginal people as the oppressed race by the British domination. Subalternity can be said as an important issue to be concerned as it leads to unfair and unpleasant treatments for the party who considered as subaltern. The researcher thinks that subalternity is such a crucial issue, considering the fate of the subalterns who can not get the rights and justice they are supposed to have.

This research is categorized as literary criticism since the researcher conducts the analysis on literary works, which including description, analysis, and also interpretation. Furthermore, this research analyzes the portrayal of subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems by using Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's perspective in subaltern study. This research also provides the relation between subalternity in the history of Aborigines and in the selected poems using New Historicism approach.

The result of this research shows that the selected poems of Oodgeroo are portraying the subaltern in the matter of the superior domination and the effects which illustrates the British superiority that lead to their domination against Aboriginal people as the weaker party and resulting the great predicaments for them. Second is in the matter of subaltern as the voiceless, which shows how the Aborigines must live surrounding by representations and misrepresentations of the privileged parties who hold domination that makes it more difficult for them to get their rights. Lastly, is the matter of the resistance of subaltern, which shows how the Aborigines put up resistance against the colonists and shows their existence as the indigenous people of the sacred land. Furthermore, this research provides the relation between the subalternity in the history of Aboriginal people and in Oodgeroo's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* in the matter of Aboriginal people who positioned as the oppressed and voiceless party under British colonization. This research also revealed that Oodgeroo is successfully speak for the Aboriginal people supported with the fact that she is an Aboriginal descent woman who write poetry in order to voice her people.

## ABSTRAK

**Khoiriyah, Wardatul.** 2020. *The Portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's Selected Poems*. Skripsi. Program Studi Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Humaniora. Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

**Pembimbing** : Dr. Siti Masitoh, M.Hum.

**Kata kunci** : Subaltern, Aborigin

Dalam studi ini, peneliti fokus mengkaji penggambaran subaltern pada puisi pilihan Oodgeroo Noonuccal. Masalah subaltern muncul karena adanya penindasan terhadap orang Aborigin sebagai dampak dari penjajahan Inggris. Hal tersebut tergambarkan dalam puisi Oodgeroo yang berjudul *We Are Going, Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, dan *The Dispossessed*. Ketiga puisi tersebut menarik untuk dikaji karena dengan jelas menggambarkan kesulitan orang Aborigin sebagai ras tertindas oleh dominasi Inggris. Subalternitas dapat dikatakan sebagai masalah penting untuk dikaji karena menimbulkan perlakuan buruk dan tidak adil terhadap pihak subaltern. Peneliti menganggap bahwa subalternitas merupakan hal krusial, mengingat takdir subaltern yang tidak bisa mendapatkan hak dan keadilan yang seharusnya mereka miliki.

Penelitian ini dikategorikan sebagai kritik sastra karena peneliti menyusun analisa pada karya sastra, yang meliputi deskripsi, analisis, dan penafsiran. Penelitian ini menganalisa penggambaran subaltern pada puisi pilihan Oodgeroo dengan perspektif Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak dalam studi subaltern. Penelitian ini juga menyajikan hubungan antara subalternitas pada sejarah orang Aborigin dan pada puisi pilihan melalui pendekatan *New Historicism*.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa puisi pilihan Oodgeroo menggambarkan subaltern dalam hal dominasi superior dan efeknya yang mengilustrasikan superioritas Inggris menuntun mereka pada dominasi terhadap orang Aborigin sebagai pihak yang lemah dan menyebabkan kesulitan besar baginya. Kedua, tentang subaltern pihak tanpa suara, yang menunjukkan bagaimana orang Aborigin hidup dalam representasi dan representasi keliru oleh pihak yang berkuasa yang membuat mereka semakin kesulitan untuk mendapatkan haknya. Terakhir, tentang perlawanan subaltern yang menunjukkan bagaimana orang Aborigin melakukan perlawanan terhadap penjajah dan menunjukkan keberadaan mereka sebagai orang asli tanah tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan hubungan antara subalternitas pada sejarah orang Aborigin dan pada puisi Oodgeroo yang berjudul *We Are Going, Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, dan *The Dispossessed* dalam hal orang Aborigin yang diposisikan sebagai pihak yang tertindas dan tanpa suara di bawah penjajahan Inggris. Penelitian ini juga mengungkap bahwa Oodgeroo sukses menyuarakan orang Aborigin dengan fakta bahwa dia seorang wanita keturunan Aborigin yang menulis puisi untuk menyuarakan suku Aboriginnya.

## مستخلص البحث

الخيرية، وردة. 2020. تصوير التابع في قصائد ودجيرو نونوكال المختارة. البحث الجامعي. قسم الآداب الإنجليزية. كلية العلوم الإنسانية. جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية مالانج.

مشرفة : دكتورة. سيتي مشبطة، الماجستير.  
الكلمات الرئيسية : التابع، الشعوب الأصلية.

في هذا البحث، تركز الباحثة على دراسة تصوير التابع في قصائد ودجيرو نونوكال المختارة. أثرت قضية التابع بسبب القمع الذي يعاني منه السكان الأصليون كأثر للاستعمار البريطاني. يتم تصويره في قصائد ودجيرو نونوكال المختارة بعنوان *We Are Going, Aboriginal Charter of Rights, The Dispossessed*. القصائد الثلاثة المختارة مثيرة للاهتمام بتحليلها، لأنها توضح بوضوح مقولة الشعوب الأصلية باعتبارها العرق المضطهد من قبل الهيمنة البريطانية. يمكن أن تقال التبعية كقضية مهمة يجب الاهتمام بها لأنها تؤدي إلى علاجات غير عادلة وغير سارة للطرف الذي يعتبر تابعا. ترى الباحثة أن التبعية هي القضية الحاسمة، بالنظر إلى مصير التابعين الذين لا يستطيعون الحصول على الحقوق والعدالة التي من المفترض أن يتمتعوا بها.

دخل هذا البحث إلى تصنيف النقد الأدبي حيث تقوم الباحثة بتحليل المصنفات الأدبية التي تحتوي على الوصف والتحليل والتفسير. علاوة على ذلك، يحلل هذا البحث تصوير التابع في قصائد ودجيرو نونوكال المختارة باستخدام نظرية غاياتري تشاكرافورتي سيفاك في دراسة التابع. يوفر هذا البحث أيضا العلاقة بين التبعية في تاريخ الشعوب الأصلية وفي القصائد المختارة باستخدام الطريقة التاريخية الجديدة.

توضح نتيجة هذا البحث أن قصائد ودجيرو المختارة تصور التابعين في مشكلة الهيمنة المتفوقة والآثار التي توضح التفوق البريطاني حيث أدى إلى هيمنتهم على الشعوب الأصلية كالتفوق الأضعف وتنتج مازق كبيرة لهم. الثانية، في مشكلة التابع كالصامت، مما يوضح كيف يجب أن تعيش الشعوب الأصلية محاطين بالتمثيلات والتحريفات للأحزاب ذات الامتيازات التي تسيطر على الهيمنة حيث تصعبهم في الحصول على حقوقهم. الأخيرة، هي مشكلة مقاومة التابع، والتي توضح كيف أن الشعوب الأصلية يقاومون المستعمرين ويظهر وجودهم كشعب أصلي للأرض المقدسة. علاوة على ذلك، يقدم هذا البحث العلاقة بين التبعية في تاريخ الشعوب الأصلية في قصائد ودجيرو المختارة بعنوان *We Are Going, Aboriginal Charter of Rights, The Dispossessed*. في مشكلة الشعوب الأصلية الذين نصبوا الحزب المضطهد والصامت تحت الاستعمار البريطاني.

كشفت هذا البحث أيضا أن ودجيرو نجحت في التحدث باسم الشعوب الأصلية المدعومين بحقيقة أنها امرأة من الشعب الأصلي تكتب الشعر من أجل التعبير عن شعبها.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The first chapter consists of background of the study, problem of the study, objective of the study, scope and limitation, significance of the study, research method, research design, data source, data collection, data analysis, and the last is the definition of key term

#### A. Background of the Study

Oodgeroo Noonuccal also called as Kath Walker (until 1998) who is regarded as ‘poet of the people’ due to her work that allows non-Aboriginal readers to step inside into the Aborigines’ lives and see why they feel oppressed by the white colonization. She also considered as the first modern-day Aboriginal protest writer and even one of the greatest Australian indigenous poets and activists. Most of her poetry is filled with images of Aboriginal people, which deals with land rights and social justice as the struggles and effects of colonization.

The British colonists arrival in 1788, marked as the beginning of the predicament of Aboriginal people. The colonists believe in the perception that the Aboriginal people are nomadic and do not own the land. They also spread the doctrine of *terra nullius* to the land, which means nobody’s land or unclaimed territory. From the colonists' behavior that keeps creating wrong statements about Aboriginal people, we could conclude that the colonists do not accept the existence of Aboriginal people who are the native land. Since then, the Australia land was taken over by the colonists without giving any compensation.

Oodgeroo Noonuccal was born with the original Anglo-Australian name Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska in full on November 3rd, 1920, in Minjerriba (well-known as North Stradbroke Island). In her 44 years old (1964), Oodgeroo's first poetry collection entitled *We Are Going* was first published. The poetry is full of the images of the Aborigines' predicament as the effects of British colonization. The poetry portrays a strong sentiment about the injustice and misery inflicted upon them. Heiss (2006) states that *We Are Going* met with great sympathy and understanding on the part of the white community. *We Are Going* helps people to see the distress of indigenous Australian Aboriginal caused by British colonialism through the Aboriginal people's eyes.

As an Aboriginal descent, Oodgeroo faces several difficulties in her life. Woods (2010) states that in her 13 years old, Oodgeroo started working as a domestic servant in people's houses. While at the age of 16, she wants to pursue her dream to be a nurse, but she was rejected in the first training because she is an Aboriginal descent. Since then, Oodgeroo decided to become a member of the Australian Communist Party in 1961 to face the inadequacy of the established political parties, in particular their failure to fight Aboriginal issues and rights. A short time later, she took a position as secretary of the Queensland State Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and served in that post until 1970. The hard-fought campaign resulted in the history-making 1967 Referendum. Australians voted overwhelmingly to include Aboriginal people in the census and to ensure they were covered by Commonwealth laws (Abbey, 2017).

In 1964, when her poetry collection *We Are Going* was first published, it began a new phase in communication and relations between black and white Australia. Since then, Oodgeroo commits to use her writing as the weapon to voice her voiceless people. According to Iswalono (2004), Oodgeroo's poetry portrays how Aboriginal people who are the nature of the land are made 'strangers' by the white tribe who are themselves the true strangers to the land.

Poetry, by definition, is one of the literary forms related to any kind of verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story or express any kind of emotions, ideas, or state of being. According to Wolosky (2001), poetry is a language that always means more. The poem's subject might be the poet's protest, satires, or a description of something else. A poet mostly tends to use not commonly language to attract people and get their curiosity to take a look at the poetry in a more in-depth way by connecting the poetry with the background of the poet or the event that happened during the time where the poetry was written. Based on the explanation above, we can say that poetry is the tool or weapon for Oodgeroo to voice what she wants to share with others.

Understanding the main themes of Oodgeroo's poems, which deal with the struggles and effects of colonization and how her poetry used as the voice of voiceless Aborigines, could give inferences that Oodgeroo's poems can be analyzed through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak perspective relating to Subaltern. Basically, Spivak's theory concept of Subaltern is to deal with 'the voiceless party.' Her essay entitled *Can the Subaltern Speak?* actually is a commentary on the work of The Subaltern Studies Group formed by Ranajit Gaha, she is

questioning and expressing their patronizing attitude. Subaltern is originally a military term, which meant lower rank. She borrowed this term from Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. In her essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* shows the earliest political historiography shifts the voice of subaltern groups (Praveen, 2016).

In postcolonial criticism itself, the word subaltern refers to a member of any group who faces oppression due to caste or gender or race. According to Spivak (1989) subaltern is a position without identity. In other words, subalterns are considered as the group of people who are not able to represent themselves as a class or social group in elite historiography. The term subaltern refers to group marginal and are at the inferior level accepts hegemony and repression from dominant parties. This group is in depressed position and have no room for voiced their aspirations.

From the explanation above, the researcher wants to analyze Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems by using Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's perspective of Subaltern. The selected poems are *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. After reading the selected poems, the researcher found that the poems comprise the idea of Aborigines' silence then exploited by the colonists' power as the superior party.

Meanwhile, the research about both of Oodgeroo's poetry and Subaltern have been executed by some previous researchers. The first research is *Aboriginal Land Rights Issue as Recorded In Oodgeroo Noonuccal's We Are Going* by Sugi

Iswalono (2012) that examines the relation of *We Are Going* with the land rights faced by the Aborigines. Second, the research by Ameer Chasib Furaih (2018) entitled '*Let no one say the past is dead*': *History wars and the poetry of Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Sonia Sanchez*. In his research, Furaih examines similarities in Oodgeroo and Sanchez's poetic themes due to a general awareness of a global movement of black resistance. Third, the research done by Chibuzor Martin Ounkwo and Chukwujekwu Adolphus Nweke (2016) entitled *Poetics of Race in the Selected Poetry of Audrey Lorde and Oodgeroo Noonuccal*. In this research, they used the Critical Race Theory to investigate the poetics of race in Lorde and Oodgeroo's poems. The fourth research is *Dominasi Penjajah terhadap Subaltern dalam Novel Sang Maharani Karya Agnes Jessica: Suatu Tinjauan Poskolonial (Colonialist Domination of Subaltern in Agnes Jessica's Sang Maharani : A Review of Gayatri C. Spivak's postcolonial)* by Nurfadhillah (2019) which explores and examines the subalternity of the colonized party in *Agnes Jessica's Sang Maharani*.

From the previous studies mentioned above, the researcher finds the gap to examine Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems by using Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's perspective about Subaltern. The selected poems are *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*.

## **B. Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the study above, the problems of the study in this research are stated below:

1. How is the portrayal of subaltern in Oodgeroo's selected poems *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*?
2. What is the relation between Subalternity in the history of Aborigines and Oodgeroo's selected poems?

## **C. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this research are formulated as follows:

1. To find out the Subaltern portrayals in Oodgeroo's selected poems, *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*.
2. To find out the relation between Subalternity in the history of Aborigines and Oodgeroo's selected poems.

## **D. Scope and Limitation**

It is surely important to state a limitation of this research to help the readers understand this study easier. Here, the researcher forms a limitation in Spivak's perspective that focuses on the portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo's selected poems. The selected poems are *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*.

## **E. Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to give significances to expand and enrich knowledge in the matter of theoretical bases of literary studies. Particularly, in analyzing poetry through Spivak's perspective about Subaltern. In addition, this research is expected to give contribution as the reference to next researchers and readers generally to understand and improve the knowledge about the history of Aboriginal people.

## **F. Research Method**

In this stage, the researcher explains the method and also the steps in order to conduct the present research. It includes research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

### **1. Research Design**

This research is done by using literary criticism. The researcher applies the concept of Subaltern by Gayatri C. Spivak to conduct the discussion and analysis on literature by focusing to the concept of subaltern portrayed in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems. The selected poems are *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. By the definition, literary criticism is the study, interpretation, and also evaluation of literature. In this case, literary criticism is the appropriate way to conduct this research in order to explain the portrayal Subaltern in the selected poems mentioned above.

## 2. Data Sources

The data sources of this study are the selected poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal entitled *We Are Going* from the first collection '*We Are Going*' in 1964 and *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* from '*The Dawn Is At Hand*' collection in 1966. The researcher also uses the history of Aboriginal people as the addition data source to connect it with the subalternity in the selected poems mentioned above.

## 3. Data Collection

The data collection is taken from words, phrase, and also sentences in the selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* of Oodgeroo Noonuccal. As the steps to get the data, first step is reading the selected poems accurately as the step to acquire data. Second step is executing by identifying the entire database on research questions.

## 4. Data Analysis

The steps for gaining the data analysis provided as follows:

1. Reading and understanding the selected poems, *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights* and *The Dispossessed* by Oodgeroo Noonuccal.
2. Highlighting the important words or sentences from the selected poems.
3. Interpreting and analyzing the selected important words or sentences by using Spivak's perspective in subaltern.

4. Integrating the results of the analysis with the data about the effects of colonization history in Aboriginal people's lives.
5. Deciding the conclusion based on the result of analyzed data.

#### **G. Definition of Key Terms**

To make a better understanding about this study, the researcher provides the key terms as follows:

1. **Subaltern:** Basically, Subaltern is deal with the voiceless of an inferior party.
2. **Aborigine:** The earliest or original inhabitants of Australia.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter explains the relevant literature related to the study of Subaltern. It is commenced with definition and explanation about the concepts of Subaltern and New Historicism. Furthermore, this chapter also provides the history of the indigenous Australian, Aboriginal peoples, the previous studies, also the paraphrase of the selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*.

#### A. Concepts of Subaltern

The subaltern meaning of a lower or inferior rank, is basically a term adopted by Antonio Gramsci to refer to working class people in the Soviet Union who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling class. Subaltern classes can include farmers, workers, and groups who deny access to hegemonic power (Mambrol, 2016). The subaltern classes are individuals or groups who are conquered by hegemony, subordinated by a dominant world view, and excluded from having a meaningful position to speak. In postcolonial studies, the term subaltern has been used to refer to individuals or groups that are dominated or oppressed by stronger parties. Subaltern theory takes the 'other' perspective as a person who has no voice because of race, class, or gender.

Mambrol (2016) states that Antonio Gramsci (1971) summarized the six points analysis of the past of the subaltern groups through his *Notes on Italian History*, which included:

1. Objective emergence of subordinate social groups by changes and transitions arising in the field of economic production; their conceptual proliferation and their roots in pre-existing social classes, whose mindset, philosophy and objectives they maintain for a while;
2. Their active or passive affiliation with the dominant political formations, their attempts to influence the programs of these formations to press for their own claims and the consequences of these attempts to determine decomposition, renovation or neo-formation processes;
3. The creation of new parties of the ruling classes, designed to maintain and regulate the support of the subaltern groups;
4. The structures formed by the subaltern groups themselves to enforce small and partial claims;
5. The new formations that assert the autonomy of the subordinate groups, but within the old framework;
6. Formations which affirm integral autonomy, etc.

The term Subaltern has been adopted for postcolonial studies from the work of the Subaltern Studies Group, which aims to promote a systematic discussion of subaltern themes in South Asian studies. This is used in the Subaltern study for the general attributes of subordination in South Asian society, whether this is expressed in class, gender race etc. The Subaltern Study Group was formed by Ranajit Guha, and was followed by Shahid Amin, David Arnold, Parha Chatterjee, David Hardiman Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Gyanendra Pandey. This group has produced 5 volumes of Subaltern Studies, essays relating to the history,

politics, economics and sociology of subalternity as well as attitudes, ideology and systems of belief (Mambrol, 2016).

The concept of Subaltern gained increased with Gayatri Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* in 1985 and reprinted in 1988, which was actually as a commentary on the Subaltern Group's work. She is questioning and exposing their patronizing attitude. Spivak adapts the Derridean deconstructive technique to show various forms of subject formations and othering. In her essay, Spivak views the fate of the subaltern subject and how it can be undermined by the politics of representation. She states that considering the margins one can just as well say the silent, silenced center of the circuit marked out by this epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban sub-proletariat (Spivak, 1988)

The term of subaltern, in Spivak's perspective refers to a population that is socially, politically, and geographically subjected by a group who hold superiority to controls them. From there we understand that there are always hegemonic practice in the subaltern group discussions, where their voices are always ethically manipulated as part of the political practice of a group to dominate. It can be said that subaltern groups are tools from a hegemony practice that symbolizes political, military, social, and even cultural dominance by a superior group. The subaltern groups are refer to people whose voices are always represented, meanwhile the representation itself is only a tool for real domination.

Spivak expands the meaning of subaltern term as not just a class word indicated for the oppressed class or for the Other group. For Spivak, in terms post-colonial, the term refers to everything related to restrictions access. It becomes a kind of differentiation room. Furthermore, Spivak explains the paradox which is always misunderstood. The main problem with subalterns is not just about the categories of people who are the oppressed or the oppressed working class, but also about those whose voices are limited by an access that represents them. What does it mean by subaltern society for Spivak is those people whose voices are always represented, so their presence is leading to a practice of domination, includes immigrants, lower-class workers, Eastern women and various post-colonial subjects.

The term subaltern also refers to marginal group and at the inferior level accepting hegemony and repression from parties dominant. This group is in position who are depressed and have no room for voice their aspirations, so that the privileged people are there to representing this group. Spivak quoted by Binebai (2015) explains the point that:

Since representation can be made by only the privileged people in the society effective representation of the subaltern subject can be a futile venture. This will always keep the Subaltern in the terrain of margin, the silent centre, the centre of voicelessness. Spivak is of the view that when the Subaltern speaks it no longer remains as Subaltern, so subalterns are marginalized people who have no voice, people who find it difficult to speak. Spivak challenges the intellectuals and postcolonial historians' assumption that the voices and perspectives of the oppressed can be recovered (p. 208).

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's arguments in her post-colonial subaltern theory was fundamentally based on what she called the silenced center. The essence of

Spivak's argument is that subordinates are not people who can be represented by privileged people (Binebai, 2015). They are subjects who must speak for themselves. They must be the inventors and masters of their own voice. Only when subalterns speak for themselves can stop them for being subaltern subjects. This is the emphasis on self-reflexivity from the subaltern.

Spivak's insistence on Subaltern's silence has been criticized by Bennita Parry, in her critique of Spivak's reading on Jean Rhys *Wide Sargasso Sea* as intentional deafness with an original voice, where the voice can be heard. Parry argues that such deafness arises from Spivak's theory of subaltern silence connecting absolute power with hegemonic discourse. According to Mambrol (2015), Parry agreed with Homi K. Bhabha in stating that the colonist's text contained the native voices, even though an ambivalent. The hybridity of colonial texts in Bhabha's words means that Subaltern has spoken.

However, Spivak argues strongly that postcolonial texts are sometimes written by privileged classes, who cannot give up their privileged positions. This means that the privileged representatives of subalterns face the danger of not having knowledge of the others and their views. Binebai (2015) states:

For the privileged class who must speak for the subaltern, there is the need for the fulfillment of an ethical task. The task of establishing a strong and positive moral relationship with those at the margins. This is the only way occupiers of privileged positions can speak for the subaltern subject. Spivak is therefore of the view that there must be an interaction between privileged class and the subaltern subject to ennoble and enable subaltern representation by the privileged class (p. 208).

Spivak also highlighted the matter of woman in subaltern group. In *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak denounces the damage done to women or women of the third world and non-Europeans. As considered as the weakest community, women as subaltern will get more cruel treatment and more difficult to speak out. Subaltern women are more silence than men. In this case, Spivak (1988) points that:

Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effected. The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for both of which there is 'evidence.' It is, rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow... (p. 8)

#### **B. History of Colonization on Aborigines**

According to Gray (1998), in the eighteenth century, Britain held a dominant position in the world, partly because of its advanced technology, seafary, and military. James Cook, on HMS Endeavor (British Royal Navy research ship), first landed at Botany Bay in 1770 during the reign of King George III, a landing that led to the first settlement in 1788 and subsequently the colonization of Australia. The British intentionally claimed that Australia was an unoccupied land. In this case, they did not come to conquer the area, but preferred to settle there to expand their colonial settlements. The "*terra nullius*" declaration meant Britain refused to accept the existence of Aboriginal people and this allowed them to take power without compensation (Gray, 1998).

According to Behrendt (2012), the very first British man who visit Australia is William Dampier. He arrived at the northern coast of Australia in 1688 and back again in 1699. Dampier is a famous buccaneer in English who sailing around the world, such as America and the Pacific. When he arrives in the Australian land and meet the Aboriginal people, his first impression is that they are savages and such a scary tribe. Then, as he returned to Britain, he spreads the negative perspective toward the indigenous people in the Australian land. He states that the inhabitants of the land are the miserabest people in the world. Seeing from their human form, they are a little different from the Brutes. The term brute is represented a person who is as fierce as a wild beast. Laced with the prejudices of the time, the observations contain the assumption of white superiority and black inferiority, which the British considered being a basic requirement for the assertion of the claim (Behrendt, 2012).

The term 'Aborigine' has been defined as one who descended from, and identified with the Australian race who inhabited Australia before the arrival of Europeans. Aboriginal people have inhabited the continent for more than 40,000 years, some say more than 100,000 years (Roberts 2008, in Desai 2015). There is scientific evidence about humans being given carbon-dated to support Aboriginal occupation of Australian land. It has been estimated around 300,000, and possibly more of Aboriginal people who settled in Australia in the late 1970s. When British came to conquer Australia. Aboriginal people are divided into clans. They live in small semi-nomadic family groups. Each group is identified by their

language and culture and will gather for social and ceremonial events (Fryer-Smith 2002).

The Aborigines initially welcomed the English settlers, because they were fascinated by them, they even helped them by showing them where they could find good water. Roberts (2008) points that:

However, when the British overstayed their welcome and tried to take their land, the Aborigines attempted to resist the invasion and were then treated like animals and killed ruthlessly. The British seized their land and natural raw materials to increase their profit making and 'get rich quick'. Colonialists subsequently reasoned their ill treatment of the Aborigines on the grounds of Darwin's evolutionary theory, and deluded themselves into believing it was a matter pertaining to the survival of the fittest – the British colonist seeing themselves as the superior race and the Aborigines as the weaker ones, which is why they were a dying race (p. 11).

As the colonists established, Aboriginal people keep being pushed off their own land. They started to lose their livelihoods, their cultural practices, and even lose their family. Between 1910-1970, many Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families as the part of the policy of assimilation (well known as The Stolen Generation). The colonists believed that one of the most effective way to assimilate Aboriginal people into European cultural ways is by taking away Aboriginal children from their families. It is estimated that between 10 percent and 33 percent of all indigenous children are separated from their families for years. Behrendt (2012) explains that:

Children taken from their parents as part of the Stolen Generation were taught to reject their Indigenous heritage, and forced to adopt white culture. Their names were often changed, and they were forbidden to speak their traditional languages. Some children were adopted by white families, and many were placed in institutions

where abuse and neglect were common. Assimilation policies focused on children, who were considered more adaptable to white society than Indigenous adults. “Half-caste” children (a term now considered derogatory for people of Aboriginal and white parentage), were particularly vulnerable to removal, because authorities thought these children could be assimilated more easily into the white community due to their lighter skin colour (p. 259).

Aboriginal people are not materialistic, because the emphasis is of their lives is placed on social, religious and spiritual activities. The environment is controlled in a spiritual rather than physical way, because religion is deeply rooted in the land (Berndt & Berndt 1992, in Purdie, Dudgeon & Walker 2010). Aboriginal people put a great importance on maintaining their culture and spirituality in all areas of life (Fryer-Smith 2002). Iswalono (2012) states that there used to be a perception of White people that Aboriginal people are nomadic people who do not own land. They believe that Aboriginal people know nothing about land ownership because they do not develop agricultural activities. They are not economically tied to the land. Iswalono (2012) states:

Therefore, white people just took the land from them without giving any compensation which was finally acknowledged by the British government. Broome, Buckley and Wheelwright have revealed that such a perception is wrong. Buckley and Wheelwright (1992:21) say that “Actually, recent research indicates that Aborigines were not as nomadic as was supposed. Periodically, they occupied regular camp sites and sometimes they constructed durable huts.” Broome shows the economic tie between Aboriginal people and their lands. He takes an aboriginal song from the Oenpelli region to reveal this idea. From his observation to the song, he arrives at the conclusion that not only does Aborigines’ love to the lands indicate a spiritual but also economic relationship: “The land not only gave life, it was life” (p. 162).

Desai (2015) points that colonialism has had a negative impact on Australia's indigenous people. It has ripped through the core of Aboriginal spirituality of

culture and sacred land. Aboriginal people lose their identity and home as they are snatched from the land where their ancestors lived for thousands of years. Their rights as indigenous people are ignored and violated and their human rights as individuals continually to be denied (Gray, 1998).

### C. New Historicism

New historicism is a form of literary theory which aims to understand intellectual history through literature, and literature through its cultural context, follows the 1950s field of history of ideas and refers to itself as a form of "Cultural Poetics". New Historicism produces the equality in history and literature. The works of literature are capable of portraying history. Literary works and the historical situation are equally important in New Historicism. It is because the literary works, which as a text and the historical situation as a context, are closely interrelated as they create each other. Abrams (1999) states that the new historicist perceives of the literary text as an integral part of the institutions, social practices, and also discourses that represent the culture of a particular time and place. Also, with which the literary text interacts as a product and producer of cultural potentials and codes. Rahayu (2013) cited from Louis Montrose describes the New Historicism as:

a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the textuality of history. That is, history is conceived not to be a set of fixed, objective facts but, like the literature with which it interacts, a text which itself needs to be interpreted. Any text, on the other hand, is conceived as a discourse which, although it may seem to present, or reflect, an external reality, in fact consists of what are called representation that is, verbal formations which are the ideological

products or cultural constructs of the historical condition specific to an era (p. 8)

New Historicism focuses on how the history is generally presented in the literature. New Historicism examines how a literary work becomes a way to find the representation of a certain era or period of the history that a literary work brings behind. It includes what is the historical and social condition of the time which is presented and how it can be interpreted and produced a specific meaning or further thought.

New Historicism also examines the relation of the author. It is focused on the author's background in order to find out the author's subjectivity. New Historicist attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its production, its meanings, its effects, and also of its later critical interpretations and evaluations (Abrams, 1999). One of its aims is finding the author's own purposes or subjectivity in their works, and what the ideas of the author are presented. In New Historicism, the authors are considered to present their own ideology over something.

#### **D. Previous Studies**

In order to strengthen the present research, the researcher provides the previous studies. The first research is *Aboriginal Land Rights Issue as Recorded In Oodgeroo Noonuccal's "We Are Going"* by Sugi Iswalono (2012) from State University of Yogyakarta. In this research, Iswalono examines the relation of the most famous poem of Oodgeroo Nonuccal, *We Are Going* with the land rights case faced by the Aborigines. Beside the relation between the poem with the land

rights, this research also explores how the lands are traditionally and economically essential to Aborigines. It also points out that Aboriginal people and the white people are different in their perception of land.

The second research is done by Ameer Chasib Furaih (2018) entitled *'Let no one say the past is dead': History wars and the poetry of Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Sonia Sanchez*. In his research, Furaih uses Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'minor literature' in order to examine about the similarities in Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Sonia Sanchez poetic themes as the results of a common awareness of a global movement of black resistance. The research highlights the role of Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Sonia Sanchez as Aboriginal Australian descent poet and African American poet in resurrecting their peoples' history.

The third research is the research done by Chibuzor Martin Ounkwo and Chukwujekwu Adolphus Nweke (2016) entitled *Poetics of Race in the Selected Poetry of Audrey Lorde and Oodgeroo Noonuccal*. In this research they use Critical Race Theory to investigate the poetics of race in Lorde and Oodgeroo's poems. Poetics of race deals with how race implicates relationship between the black and white races, and the social and ideological constructions of identities that stratify humans on grounds of skin colour. The researchers also focus on the study of the subjection and objectification of women, the thematic preoccupations of the erotic, the deification of anthropomorphic elements of nature, and the influences of colonialism on the colonized.

The fourth research is *Dominasi Penjajah terhadap Subaltern dalam Novel Sang Maharani Karya Agnes Jessica: Suatu Tinjauan Poskolonial (Colonialist Domination of Subaltern in Agnes Jessica's Sang Maharani : A Review of Gayatri C. Spivak's postcolonial)* by Nurfadhillah (2019) from State University of Makassar. The research explores and examines the subalternity of the colonized party in the novel. The result of the research shows that is the affects of colonial domination over subaltern and subaltern resistance to colonialists is illustrated by figures Maharani, Moetiara, Girl in the brothel. The result shows namely 24 colonists' dominance, 24 influences of the dominance, and 25 subaltern resistance to colonists.

The previous studies mentioned above serve as the references that help the researcher to conduct the present research. The first, second, and third previous research help the researcher to explore more about aborigines and also the relation between Oodgeroo Noonuccal's poems with the aborigines' predicament caused by the white colonialists. From those previous studies, the researcher could see the gap to conduct the present research in more specifically way by examine the subalternity in the selected poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal by using Spivak's perspective in Subaltern study. Meanwhile, the fourth previous study helps the researcher in the matter of how to analyze a literary work in the matter of subalternity.

## CHAPTER III

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the third chapter, the researcher would like to present the finding and discussion as the answer of the research questions which have been mentioned in the first chapter by presenting and analyzing the data. The researcher tries to analyze the selected poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal, *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* through Spivakian Subaltern theory. The researcher also presents the relation between the Subalternity in the history of Aborigines and in Oodgeroo's selected poems.

The researcher describes the finding and discussion of the portrayal of subaltern in Oodgeroo's selected poems which consists of three steps. First step is paraphrasing the selected poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal. Secondly, providing the results of data analysis in the matter of the superior domination and the effects, subaltern as the voiceless, and the resistance of the subaltern group. And lastly, connecting the findings of analysis to the history of Aborigines in order to see the relation between subalternity in the history of Aborigines and in Oodgeroo's selected poems. For further analysis, it is explained below:

#### A. Paraphrase of Oodgeroo's Selected Poems

In this section, the researcher provides the paraphrase of the selected poems by Oodgeroo Noonuccal entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*.

## 1. *We Are Going*

*We Are Going* is the most well-known poem of Oodgeroo from her first collection of poetry with the same name entitled *We Are Going* was published by Jacaranda Press in 1964. In this section, the researcher paraphrases the poem.

*They came in to the little town  
A semi-naked band subdued and silent  
All that remained of their tribe.*

*They came here to the place of their old bora ground  
Where now the many white men hurry about like ants. 5  
Notice of the estate agent reads: 'Rubbish May Be Tipped Here'.  
Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.*

*'We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.  
We belong here, we are of the old ways.*

*We are the corroboree and the bora ground, 10  
We are the old ceremonies, the laws of the elders.  
We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told.  
We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering camp fires.  
We are the lightning bolt over Gaphembah Hill  
Quick and terrible, 15  
And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.*

*We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark lagoon.  
We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low.  
We are nature and the past, all the old ways  
Gone now and scattered. 20*

*The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the laughter.  
The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this place.  
The bora ring is gone.  
The corroboree is gone.  
And we are going. 25*

In the first stanza, the lines describe the Aboriginal people as “They, the semi-naked people who subdued and silent come to the little town. They all that remained of their tribe.” In the first line, some of the readers might think the word *They* refers to the British people who landed in Australia around 1770 and led to

the first settlement in 1788. However, the word *They* refers more to Aboriginal people by paying attention to the second and third lines which explain about the subdued and silent semi-naked people that remained from their tribe. The words subdued and silent can refer to the effect of the colonization which makes them end up as the weak or inferior party who could not do anything to fight the British as the superior party.

Then in the second stanza, the lines tell that “The subdued and silent semi-naked people come to their old bora ground where many white men are rushing like ants, and they see ‘Rubbish May Be Tipped Here’ sign as if the rubbish piles up and swallows the half of the old bora ring.” In the line 4, there is *old bora ground*, bora ground is the sacred place for Aboriginal people to hold their ceremonials. Meanwhile, in the line 7 there is *the old bora ring*, bora ring is the circle in the bora ground that constructed from earth and stone. The Aboriginal people used to gather in bora ground and hold a ceremony that can called as man-making, it is a sacred ceremony for boys who are having reached their puberty to achieve the status of men. In the line 5, there is *white man hurry about like ants*. Oodgeroo uses simile *like ants* to tell how the British work in a big hurry. *Notice of the estate agent reads: ‘Rubbish May Be Tipped Here’* in line 6 illustrates how disrespectful the British colonists to Australian land which was very sacred and valuable to Aboriginal people.

In the third stanza, the line 8 and 9 tell that “The subdued and silent semi-naked people” say “We are as strangers in the bora ground, but the true strangers are the white people, we belong here, we are the true native of the land.”

Oodgeroo uses first-person point of view *We* as the speaker to directly refer to the Aboriginal people. The third stanza shows how the Aboriginal people lost their land and also their identity as the indigenous of Australia land. They end up as the strangers in their own land. In the two lines of third stanza Oodgeroo uses repetition *We* in the beginning of the lines.

Then in the fourth stanza, the lines show how “The subdued and silent semi-naked people” state that “We are the corroboree and the bora ground, we are the old ceremonies, the laws of the elders. We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told. We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering camp fires. We are the lightning bolt over Gaphembah Hill that quick and terrible, and the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.” The fourth stanza represents the Aboriginal people who describe themselves as the anything that become their cultural customs. In line 10, there is *the corroboree* which is a sacred ceremonial or important celebration of Aboriginal people. There are repetitions *We are the...* in the beginning of the lines from line 10 until line 16. In the fourth stanza Oodgeroo uses metaphor in all lines, such as *We are the corroboree...*, *we are the old ceremonies...*, *we are the wonder tales of Dream Time...* and so on.

In line 12, there is *Dream Time* that is the stories about understanding the world and its creation believed by Aboriginal people, also can called as the foundation of religion and life for Aboriginal people. Then, in line 14 there is *Gaphembah Hill*, according to Derek (2016) Gaphembah Hill is a place located in the area of Moreton Bay where the Noonuccal people stayed. In line 14 until 16,

Oodgeroo uses metaphor to represent the Aboriginal people as quick and terrible *lightening bolt* and *loud Thunderer*. In line 16, Oodgeroo uses personification to *the Thunderer* as loud fellow who comes after the lightening bolt. The word *Thunderer* can be interpreted that the Aboriginal people is the controller of thunder or the thunder itself.

In the fifth stanza, “The subdued and silent semi-naked people” again state that “We are the quiet daybreak that blanching the dark lagoon. We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low. We are nature and the past, all the old ways that gone now and scattered.” The fifth stanza portrays how the Aboriginal people lost their rights in their own land that they fully enjoyed in the past, everything they used to have slowly scattered and disappeared. In line 17, 18, and, 19, Oodgeroo uses metaphor such as *We are the quiet daybreak... We are the shadow-ghosts... We are nature and the past...* and also uses repetition *We* in the beginning of lines. The use of metaphor illustrates that the Aboriginal people belong to the Australia land as they should. It also shows the strong bond between the Aboriginal people with the Australia land and how precious the land to them.

In the last stanza, the five lines mention the things that “The subdued and silent semi-naked people” lost. It mentions that “The scrubs, the hunting, and the laughter are gone. The eagle, the emu, and the kangaroo are gone from this place. The bora and the corroboree ring is gone.” The last stanza shows that Aboriginal people lost everything valuable to them. It shows that they lost their sacred land and also the animals that are the Australian symbols, such as emu and kangaroo.



*Status, not discrimination,* 25  
*Human rights, not segregation.*

*You the law, like Roman Pontius,*  
*Make us proud, not colour-conscious;*  
*Give the deal you still deny us,*  
*Give goodwill, not bigot bias;* 30  
*Give ambition, not prevention,*  
*Confidence, not condescension;*  
*Give incentive, not restriction,*  
*Give us Christ, not crucifixion.*  
*Though baptized and blessed and Bibled 35*  
*We are still tabooed and libelled.*

*You devout Salvation-sellers,*  
*Make us neighbours, not fringe-dwellers;*  
*Make us mates, not poor relations,*  
*Citizens, not serfs on stations.* 40

*Must we native Old Australians*  
*In our own land rank as aliens?*  
*Banish bans and conquer caste,*  
*Then we'll win our own at last.*

In the first stanza, Oodgeroo uses the first-person point of view *We* as the speaker that directly refers to the Aboriginal people. The first stanza voices the Aborigines' hopes and demands. "We want hope, brotherhood, and black advancement, we do not want racialism, ostracism, and white supremacy. Make us equals, not servient." From the first lines of the poem, the frustration mood can be felt strongly already. The repetition of the word *not* after the demands can portray how many unjust things that must be experienced by the Aboriginal people as the effect of British colonization.

The second stanza, the speaker *We* demands the freedom rights for their lives. "We need help, we want freedom, self-reliance, independence, give us education, and self-respect. We do not need exploitation, not frustration, we do not want to be controlled, we do not want to be subdued, we do not need rejection and

resignation.” In the second stanza, the frustration mood becomes stronger. Such as in line 5, *We need help, not exploitation*, can portrays how severe the hardships experienced by Aboriginal people as the colonized party. The use of repetition *We need... not...* and *We want... not...* and also the end rhyme in the lines emphasizing what they are asking for and what they are not asking to live properly as the indigenous Australian should.

The third stanza, can be said that the speaker asking desperately to forget the past slavery and starting to help their present lives by free them from bureaucrat and give them forever home, not the settlement that presented in line 13. “Free us from a mean subjection, From a bureaucrat Protection. Let's forget the old-time slavers. Give us fellowship and encouragement, not favours or prohibitions. Give us homes, not settlements and missions.” In this stanza, Oodgeroo uses firmer words such as *Free us... Give...* to express the demands in more clearly way. As presented in the previous stanzas, the third stanza also use end rhyme in the lines that can exert an emphasis on important words.

In the fourth stanza, the speaker *We* demands for peace and equality between white and black. “We need love, not overlordship, Grip of hand, not whip-hand wardship. Take the opportunity to place white and black on equal basis.” The fourth stanza portrays how the speaker *We* that represents Aboriginal people are a peaceful group and do not like conflict. However, the arrival of the British who then seized their land and made them lose many important things in their lives. In line 18, there is *whip-hand wardship* which gives an idea of how colonization is

always closely related to physical violence and even slaughter agenda. In this stanza, Oodgeroo also uses end rhyme in the lines.

In the fifth stanza, Oodgeroo gives such an angry tone. “You depress us, not defend us. You, who should befriend with us, turn ignoring us. Give us a welcome, choice, status, and human rights. We do not need aversion, cold coercion, discrimination, and alienation.” The words in fifth stanza express the frustration and anger of the speaker as the Aboriginal people for being colonized and also alienated in their own land. The word *You* might refer to the colonists or Australian government and the population. In this stanza, Oodgeroo uses repetition again in line 23 and 24, *Give us... not...* and also uses end rhyme in the lines like the previous stanzas.

In the sixth stanza, the speaker tells about religion things. “You are the law, just like Roman Pontius. Make us proud, do not colour-conscious and give the deal you still deny us. Give us goodwill, ambition, confidence, not bigot bias, prevention, or condescension. Give us incentive, not restriction. Give us Christ, not crucifixion. Though we are baptized, blessed, and Bibled, we are still tabooed and libelled.” In line 27, Oodgeroo uses metaphor *You the law* and there is *Roman Pontius* that refers to Pontius Pilate who was the fifth governor of Roman. He was well-known as the person behind the order of crucifixion of Jesus. The word *You* in this stanza clearly intended to the British colonists. In sixth stanza, Oodgeroo uses repetition, *Give... not...* or *give us... not...* and also uses end rhyme in the lines.

In line 28, *Make us proud, not colour-conscious* portrays discrimination based on skin color also known as colorism. In line 34, it says *Give us Christ, not crucifixion* represents the same idea in the fourth stanza of how colonization is related to physical violence and even massacre. According to Allam and Nick (2019), starting in 1794, the mass slaughter on Aboriginal people was first carried out by British forces, then by native officers and immigrants. They were serving under the orders of white officers, in militia-style units funded by the colonial governments. The sixth stanza ends with two lines that express the irony of Aboriginal people as the colonized party. *Though baptized and blessed and Bibles, We are still tabooed and libelled* illustrate that the Aboriginal people could not get a better life even if they embraced the religion brought by the colonists.

In the seventh stanza, the speaker tells “You are the religious Salvation-sellers. Make us your neighbours, not outsiders. Make us being mates, not being in poor relations. We are citizens, not the slaves on stations.” The word *You* in this stanza refers more to the colonists. There is a sarcasm in line 37, *You devout Salvation-sellers*. The word *Salvation* refers to beliefs in Christianity relating to the act of saving a soul from evil or sin, and followed with *sellers* can give the idea about using religion as a business or illustrate how the British colonists were trying to spread their religion that is Christianity to Aboriginal people. The word *Salvation-sellers* tends to have a negative meaning and Oodgeroo puts *devout* sarcastically as if they are hiding their disrepute behind the religious-mask. In line 38 and 39,

Oodgeroo uses repetition *Make us... not...* and also uses end rhyme in the lines like the previous stanzas

In the last stanza, Oodgeroo states clearly that the speaker *We* in the poem is referring to Aboriginal people, “Must we, the native Old Australians being aliens in our own land? Banish the bans and conquer the caste, Then we'll win our own at last.” The last stanza gives hope for a movement to defend the rights of Aboriginal people as the indigenous of Australia to live properly on their own land. By using provoking words *Must we native Old Australians, In our own land rank as aliens?* in line 41 and 42, Oodgeroo emphasizes on how eager she is to make Aboriginal people have their seized rights and to be treated equally to the white population in Australia. In line 43 *Banish bans and conquer caste* shows that the Aboriginal need to move and fight for their rights. The closing line *Then we'll win our own at last* can be said to give confidence about the success or failure to reclaim what is theirs and at least they have tried to fight for their rights, so they can win themselves because they are not just giving up.

### 3. *The Dispossessed*

*The Dispossessed* is one of the poems by Oodgeroo from her *The Dawn is at Hand* collection which she dedicated to Uncle Willie McKenzie (one of the most famous Aboriginal people in Queensland’s history). It was published in 1989 by Champion Press. In this section, the researcher paraphrases the poem.

*Peace was yours, Australian man,  
with tribal laws you made,  
Till White Colonials stole your peace*

*with rape and murder raid;  
They shot and poisoned and enslaved                    5  
until, a scattered few,  
Only a remnant now remain,  
and the heart dies in you.*

*The white man claimed your hunting grounds  
and you could not remain,                                    10  
They made you work as menials  
for greedy private gain;*

*Your tribes are broken vagrants now  
wherever whites abide,  
And justice of the white man                                15  
means justice to you denied.*

*They brought you Bibles and disease,  
the liquor and the gun:  
With Christian culture such as these  
the white command as won.                                20*

*A dying race you linger on,  
degraded and oppressed,  
Outcasts in your own native land  
you are the dispossessed*

*When Churches mean a way of life,                        25  
as Christians proudly claim,  
And when hypocrisy is scorned  
and hate is counted shame,  
Then only shall intolerance die  
and only injustice cease,                                    30  
And white and dark as brothers find  
equality and peace.*

*But on, so long the wait has been,  
so slow the justice due,  
Courage decays for want of hope,                        35  
and the heart dies in you.*

Oodgeroo uses second-person point of view *You* in this poem that clearly refers to the Aboriginal people which called as *Australian man* in the opening line. In the first stanza, the speaker tells how the peace of Aboriginal people was seized by the British colonists. “You were living in peace with the tribal laws you

made, Australian man. Until the white arrived and seized everything of yours with rape and massacre. They shot, poisoned, and enslaved your people until only a few remain, and your heart dies inside you.” In the second line, there is *with tribal laws you made* illustrates the laws of Aboriginal people that related with their culture, religion, and also their bond with the land provide peace in their lives.

In line 3, 4, and 5 Oodgeroo uses clear words *with rape and murder raid; They shot and poisoned and enslaved...* to show how the British colonists stole everything that belongs to Aboriginal people by rape and slaughtering them. There is *poisoned* word that actually refers to the massacre of Aboriginal people caused by the disease that intentionally spread by colonists which is known as Disease-as-Genocide. According to Colin (1999), the Disease-as-Genocide happened about fifteen months after the first settlement of the British people. In line 8, Oodgeroo uses metaphor *the heart dies in you*, it can be interpreted as the illustration of how aboriginal people feel as if their heart dies inside when they have to watch their tribesmen or even their families cruelly killed by the British colonists.

In the second stanza, the lines tell about the seizure of Australian land by the British colonists, “They seized your land and you could not remain. They force you to work like a slave for their business.” In line 9, Oodgeroo uses *hunting grounds* as the illustration of Australian land, it is because the Aboriginal people used to hunt in order to meet the needs of their lives and also to strengthen their bond with the Australian nature. In line 10, *and you could not remain* shows how Aboriginal people do not have a strong power to fight the colonists and defend

their sacred land. Because of that fact, the Aboriginal people ended up as the inferior party who can not do anything. In line 11 and 12, *They made you work as menials for greedy private gain*; portrays the slavery of Aboriginal people which solely for the benefit of the British party. In this stanza, Oodgeroo uses repetition *you* and *your*, she also uses end rhyme in the lines.

The third stanza shows the satire about how the lives of Aboriginal people became miserable after the arrival of the British colonists, “The white people stay everywhere and your tribesmen are poor homeless now. What is justice for them is injustice for you.” In line 13, Oodgeroo illustrates the Aboriginal people as *broken vagrants* and by connecting with the fact that the Aboriginal people became the *broken vagrants* in their own sacred land is able to give the impression of irony about their struggle in facing the British colonization. In line 14, *wherever whites abide* portrays about the times when the British colonists had taken control and claimed the Australian land. In the last lines, *And justice of the white man means justice to you denied* provide the portrayal of irony in the matter of justice that was never obtained by Aboriginal people who lost all of their rights as indigenous people in the land of Australia.

In the fourth stanza, the lines tell about the culture such as religion and liquor that brought and tried to spread by British colonists in Aboriginal land, “They brought Bibles, disease, liquor, and also gun to you. Those Christian cultures they brought seemed to make them as the superior.” The line 17 mentions *Bibles and disease*, the *Bible* refers to the Christianity that brought by the British colonists. The Aboriginal people can not accept the Christianity since it too much different

from their beliefs in the matter of god and religion. They are very religious and spiritual, and instead of praying to a specific god that they can not even see. Each community usually believes in a variety of different gods whose existence is also portrayed in some noticeable and obvious way such as a landscape, a picture in a rock, or a feature of a plant or animal.

Meanwhile, the *disease* refers to the massive death of Aboriginal people caused by the disease that intentionally spread by colonists which is also known as Disease-as-Genocide. Aboriginal people have been living for many years with small contact with the outsider. As they are living in a clean and healthy environment, their immune system do not have natural resistance to the new diseases that common in European. The diseases that affect the Aborigines included cold, influenza, measles, and small-pox. In 1789, the small-pox epidemic spread through around Sydney and led to the death almost half of the Aboriginal population. Furthermore, in line 19 and 20, *With Christian culture such as these the white command as won*, Oodgeroo uses satirical words as if to show the pride of the British in their Christian religion. In this stanza, Oodgeroo also uses end rhyme in the lines.

In the fifth stanza, “You survive on your dying race that oppressed and insulted. Being alienated in your own sacred land. You are the dispossessed.” show the image of irony about Aboriginal people’s predicament as the effect of British colonization. In this stanza, the ironic and angry tone that Oodgeroo puts in each line is able to give an illustration of how miserable the lives of Aboriginal people are. Oodgeroo uses *A dying race, degraded, and oppressed* as the

representation of Aboriginal people who unjustly have to lose everything they own, such as their sacred land, customs, members of the tribe, and family, even their identity as the indigenous people seems to be lost as well. In line 23, Oodgeroo clearly states *Outcasts in your own native land* to reinforce what she wants to show the reader, especially the target parties such as the state that colonized her tribesmen and the Australian government itself. In line 24, *you are the dispossessed* give the impression of an emphasis to strengthen the poem. In this stanza, Oodgeroo also uses end rhyme in the lines like the previous stanzas.

In the sixth stanza, the words in each line show the hopes and also sarcasm, “If Christianity is the way of life as they proudly claim, and if hypocrisy is reviled and hatred is considered as guilt, then the prejudice will disappear, and unfairness will stop, and white and dark as brothers will find equality and peace.” In line 25 and 26, Oodgeroo again mentions Christianity embraced by the British colonists. In line 27 until 32, the lines contain dreams and hopes about peace and equality that all human beings in this world should have and feel. In line 31, there is *And white and dark* which in this poem might more refer to the British colonists and Aboriginal people. In fact that many of Aboriginal people call themselves as black-fellas. In the next words, the interpretation of *as brothers* can be connected to the period when the Aboriginal people welcomed the first arrival of the British people very well, but rewarded by the dispossession of their rights as the indigenous people in the end. If we pay attention to line 25 until 28, the arrangement of words on the lines has similarities but has a different tone.

<p><i>When Churches mean a way of life, as Christians proudly claim,</i></p>	}	<p>Expresses mockery towards the British</p>
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*And when hypocrisy is scorned  
and hate is counted shame,*

In the last stanza, the lines portray the desperation of the Aboriginal people who were waiting for their hopes could come true, “But we have been waiting for so long to see the justice, your bravery that wants hope disappears, and your heart dies inside.” This stanza, can be interpreted as the long and arduous struggle of Oodgeroo and Aboriginal people who had to fight for their rights that deprived after being colonized for a long time. In this stanza, Oodgeroo gives such a wrath and also desperate tone to express her disappointment. In the closing line, Oodgeroo repeats the same line in the first stanza *and the heart dies in you* in order to give the impression of an emphasis on her deep disappointment for what happened to her tribe.

#### **B. The Portrayal of Subaltern in Oodgeroo’s Selected Poems**

In this section, the researcher describes the portrayal of subaltern in the three selected poems of Oodgeroo entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossed* through Spivak’s perspective. As mentioned before, in her ideas on subaltern study, Spivak highlighted the domination of the superior against the inferior, the lives of the subalterns who are always surrounding by representation which led them to be the voiceless, and the emphasis that the subaltern must speak for themselves to stop them for being subaltern. In this case, the researcher provides the superior domination and the effects, subaltern as the voiceless, and the resistance of subaltern portrayed in the selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossed*.

## 1. The Superior Domination and the Effects in Oodgeroo's Selected Poems

In this section, the researcher provides the findings of the superior party domination and the effects which led the colonized party as subaltern group in the selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. In Spivak's perspective, the domination and oppression by the superior party against the inferior party that considered as subaltern group is actually supported by the helpless subaltern itself.

The selected poems of Oodgeroo are full with the images of colonization through the colonized party's point of view. In this case, the colonized party refers to the indigenous people of Australian land, the Aborigines. In the poems, Oodgeroo illustrates the great predicaments experienced by the Aboriginal people in dealing with the British colonization and the effects of it. In dealing with the British colonization, the Aboriginal people have to experience a lot of physical, mental, and even sexual violence, which most of those cases are causing death.

The oppression of the superior party which is in this case is referring to British against the Aboriginal people as the inferior party arise by the conflict of the land rights. Different from the Aboriginal people who put a huge respect and value the land with the bond and spiritual beliefs, the British claimed the land by force and treated the land as the business field for gaining wealth.

*The white man claimed your hunting grounds  
and you could not remain,  
They made you work as menials  
for greedy private gain; (*The Dispossessed*, line 9-12).*

The words *claimed your hunting grounds* and *made you work as menials* from *The Dispossessed* illustrate how the British claimed the land and forcefully labored the indigenous people. The use of *claimed* and *made* words show the superiority of the British who hold domination over the indigenous people. As the British claimed the land, the Aboriginal are forced to both work for farming or as stockman without any reward or wages. All of the benefits of the forced labor of Aboriginal people belong to the colonial government.

From Spivak's perspective, the term of subaltern refers to marginal group who accept hegemony and repression from dominant parties in the inferior level. In this case, the position of the helpless Aborigines are considered as the inferior party who must accept repression from British as the superior party. The British colonists are seizing their sacred land and even force them to work on the land without any reward.

The presence of British colonists who are increasingly spread and seize their sacred land surely pushing off Aboriginal people continually from the land that belongs to them. Beside suffering from the oppression, the Aborigines also can not get the justice for their stolen rights.

*Your tribes are broken vagrants now  
wherever whites abide,  
And justice of the white man  
means justice to you denied. (*The Dispossessed*, line 13-16).*

As presented in this stanza from *The Dispossessed*, the lines *justice of the white man means justice to you denied* portray the reality that Aboriginal people are very difficult even can not to get justice for their predicaments which is not something they should receive. With the fact that Aboriginal people do not know

about ownership business to the land, they considered the land as the part of their lives, culture, and spirituality. Then the British arrived and seize every precious things for them to gain wealth.

Furthermore, the clear statements related with the status of the Aborigines as the dying race in this stanza can found in the next stanza:

*A dying race you linger on,  
degraded and oppressed,  
Outcasts in your own native land  
you are the dispossessed (The Dispossessed, line 21-24).*

The words such as *degraded and oppressed*, *outcasts*, and *the dispossessed* are the terms that can not be separated from the lives of Aboriginal people. They are degraded and oppressed, as their precious sacred land is used as a business field for worldly gain. Their beliefs are underestimated and tried to be replaced by the religion the colonists brought. Their young generation is separated from the families and forced to forget their Aboriginality as the true identity. They are the outcasts, as they are marginalized and pushed off from their land with advanced weapons that ready to kill them at any time.

Furthermore, Spivak also points out in the matter of subject who depressed or generally located inferior level as subaltern group. In this case, the Aborigines are always in inferior position and get depression as the strangers give them inhumanly oppression and claim their land without any respect to them as the true indigenous people to the Australian land. As the effects of the oppression, the indigenous people inevitably have to live as strangers in their own land. As portrayed in the lines from *We Are Going*:

*We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.*

*We belong here, we are of the old ways. (We Are Going, line 8-9).*

In this line, *'We are as strangers here now* illustrates how the Aborigines slowly lost their livelihoods and their identity as indigenous people. At first, the conflict of land rights unavoidably led to conflict, often violent, as Aboriginal people tried to resist the dispossession as best as they could. However, their resistances led to the massacres. The Aboriginal people must lose their rights as human also as the indigenous of the land, they lose the sacred land which has an important connection with their spirituality, and they also lose their families and generations of Aboriginal tribe. The true strangers are successfully pushed off the true native from their sacred land.

Furthermore, considered as the colonized party, Aboriginal people seem to lead their new life that will never be as comfortable and peaceful as the days before the arrival of British colonists.

*We need help, not exploitation,  
We want freedom, not frustration;  
Not control, but self-reliance,  
Independence, not compliance,  
Not rebuff, but education,  
Self-respect, not resignation. (The Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 5-10).*

In this stanza which from *The Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, the words such as the *exploitation* clearly aimed to the massacres of Aboriginal people. The massacres began in 1794 by the members of British colonists, then flourished to involve the local officers and settlers under the command of British colonial government. In 1806, the more severe slaughtering began, Aboriginal children were abducted for forced labour, women were raped and abused, and men were shot. The people were killed intentionally with the reason because they are Aboriginal people. The

British colonial governments were continuously involved in frontier massacres until at least the late 1920s.

Meanwhile, the *frustration*, *control*, and *compliance* words related with how the Aboriginal people can not live their lives freely. They have to obey the laws established by the colonial government and even threatened with physical violence or even killed if they are considered to have done what is prohibited by the laws. The colonial government managed to control the lives of the remaining Aboriginal people by spreading stories that seemed to conceal the predicaments of the colonized party and even took over the media to decrease their negative image.

There is a story told that the Aboriginal people willingly gave the land because they can not value it properly. However, the story was intentionally spread to conceal and legitimately defend the illegal colonization by British. Moreover, the colonial government takes over the media which have played a part in misrepresenting the facts by reporting the case as if the Aborigines were just settlers in the land of Australia and not the real indigenous. In other case, according to Roberts (2008) The Aboriginal Protection Act (1869) declared to give Aboriginal people protection, but instead they give the British the power to seize the land.

In this case, the lives of Aborigines are in the position as subaltern who always surrounding by British laws and control. The term of subaltern itself can be related to a population that is socially, politically, and geographically subjected

by a group that controls them. Moreover, the lines mention *self-respect* to highlight one of the biggest things seized from Aboriginal people is their self-esteem. As the colonized party, Aboriginal people must live with several pressures that lead them to experience psychological instability. It is compounded with the British colonists who are deliberately destroying the culture and belief of Aboriginal people by took their sacred land which is the most valuable thing for them. Since then, the Aboriginal seem to have lost their identity as the indigenous people and questioning about their self-esteem which has been cruelly demeaned.

As mentioned before, the indigenous people of Australian land are treated as the subject of the British colonists. They unhesitatingly dominating and ruling on Aboriginal people land.

*Free us from a mean subjection,  
From a bureaucrat Protection.  
Let's forget the old-time slavers:  
Give us fellowship, not favours;  
Encouragement, not prohibitions.  
Homes, not settlements and missions. (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 11-16)*

In this stanza from *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, the lines illustrate how the Aboriginal people found it difficult to get the freedom of their lives. They were driven from their land, placed in settlement camps, forced to comply the laws made by the colonial government, and surrounding by the domination of the British colonists. The lives of Aboriginal people seem to be inseparable from the subjection and parties that engaged under British government's command which aimed to facilitate the occupation. The untrue stories spread by the colonists, manipulation played by the media, and even the communities that claimed

themselves as the protector for the Aborigines are actually used to restrict the movement of Aboriginal people who began the attempt to take a higher resistance.

The fact is, in their previous lives, Aboriginal people always maintain peace in their lives. They are not too fond of conflict which will only cause injury and blood in the brotherhood in their sacred land. The Aboriginal people put a huge respect and value the Australian land. However, the arrival of British destroyed the peace in the Australian land. As portrayed below:

*We need love, not overlordship,  
Grip of hand, not whip-hand wardship  
Opportunity that places  
White and black on equal basis. (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 17-20).*

In this stanza from *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, the words such as *overlordship* and *whip-hand wardship* represent the British domination and oppression towards Aboriginal people. From the beginning of their arrival, the British consider the indigenous people as savages and primitive people. As mentioned before, British hold a strong dominant position in the world in the eighteenth century for their advanced technology, seafaring, and great military. Because of that, the British do not want to put any respect to the land and Aboriginal people who are the true native of the land. Meanwhile, the Aboriginal people do not really have prejudice toward British colonists because they thought those white people would only stay for a while and would go on their way. The Aboriginal people decided to help the colonists to survive in their land, even guide them where they could find good water.

However, the peaceful tribe who maintains prosperity in their sacred land must receive cruel oppression in return. As the colonists are spread out and established from their initial borders, Aboriginal people start to be attacked and then pushed off from their land by force into settlement camps. The peaceful path is impossible for both parties since the British party intended to seize the land of Aboriginal people and ask them to comply their laws which is very different from the Aborigines party who only demand their sacred land back and let them to live peacefully as before.

In the opening stanza of *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, it mentions the other effects of the British colonization.

*We want hope, not racialism,  
 Brotherhood, not ostracism,  
 Black advance, not white ascendance:  
 Make us equals, not dependants (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 1-4).*

The lines mentioned *racialism*, *ostracism*, and *dependants* as the things that certainly experienced by Aboriginal people. Racism and ostracism are something that has been obtained by the indigenous people from the beginning of the oppression in their land. They were considered as a dying race who have no power to defend their rights and the land. The negative stereotypes also aimed to the Aborigines spread by the British colonists who said that Aborigines are primitive and violent, lazy, even alcoholics. In fact, Aboriginal people teach the moral values such as gratitude to the land and respect to the elders. They are frowning on violence particularly against women and children. They are also far

from the term lazy, since hunting and practicing their culture, are some of the things that become their daily activities.

The issues relating to racialism and ostracism are still not disappearing and even many of Aboriginal people are experiencing it in the twentieth century. As Paradies, Harris, & Anderson (2008) states that the racial discrimination experienced by Aboriginal people is resulting stress and depression then ended up causing poor both of mental and physical health. As the effect of British colonization, racialism is being one of the most burdensome for their psychological health. Meanwhile, the *Black advance, not white ascendance* and *Make us equals, not dependants* lines represent the social oppression that degrading the status of Aboriginal people as a race that is always beneath the supremacy of white people.

In the other stanza, the words such as *aversion, cold coercion, and discrimination* are some of the social pressure faced by Aboriginal people as the effect of British colonization.

*You dishearten, not defend us,  
Circumscribe, who should befriend us.  
Give us welcome, not aversion.  
Give us choice, not cold coercion.  
Status, not discrimination.  
Human rights, not segregation. (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 21-26).*

The Aborigines unfairly receive such treatments by the reason that they are Aboriginal descent. Meanwhile the *segregation* refers the agenda of the Stolen Generations, this term is used to describe the forced separation of Aboriginal children from their families. The reason of the Stolen Generations is to end the

chain of the Aboriginal tradition that has passed through generations and end up ruin the future of the Aboriginal community. As the result, the Aboriginal children are suffering from trauma and questioning their true identity as the British colonists attempt to remove their Aboriginality.

The British colonial government is considering that the culture of Indigenous is primitive and barbaric, so the children are facing harsh lives and not suitable for children in general if they stay with their Aboriginal parents. However, the considerations are actually influenced by the racist assumptions that Aboriginal people can not be a good parent for their children. In the reality, the children who taken away from their families do not even have a better life. Many of them are being abused physically, emotionally, even sexually. The children even get punishment if they are talking by their Aboriginal language.

The ironic thing is, they are taken away from their Aboriginal parents with the reason for their better life but they never get the affection and love to get the better life as promised. Most of the girls are taught to be servants and the boys to be stockman and some other children are adopted into white families. Because of the Stolen Generations, many of Aboriginal children loss and questioning their identity, they also experience stress, depression, and low self-esteem.

Besides separating the Aboriginal children from their parents that called as the Stolen Generations, the British also tried to spread Christianity religion that they believed in to the Aboriginal people.

*Give us Christ, not crucifixion.*

*Though baptized and blessed and Bibled*

*We are still tabooed and libelled. (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 34-36).*

This lines represent how the British are trying to spread Christianity in the land of Australia when the Aboriginal people are still trapped in British domination which is often tinged with violence and even murder. The British can not understand the belief of Aboriginal people that based on philosophy of natural environment. The sacred ceremony and rituals are the way how the Aboriginal communicate with the ancestral spirits and spiritual world. That is why the Aboriginal people have a strong bond to their land. However, the British do not want to understand and respect the belief of Aboriginal people, they only considered that Aboriginal people are heathens so they need to convert the people to Christianity.

Furthermore, the Aborigines are seen as a dying race, they were physically discriminated against, forcibly pushed off their lands and families, relocated to settlement camps and stations.

*The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the laughter.*

*The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this place.*

*The bora ring is gone.*

*The corroboree is gone.*

*And we are going (We Are Going, line 21-25).*

The line *And we are going* portrays the disappointment and frustration of the Aborigines. The closing line illustrates how desperate the Aboriginal people who found it difficult to get the justice and their rights as the indigenous of Australia, even inevitably have to be marginalized from their own land. The line *And we are going* is the actual irony of the indigenous lives that can not be saved from the predicaments and must leave their sacred land.

Considered as the inferior party, the Aboriginal people find it difficult to reach their freedom and get their land back under the white superiority.

*Must we native Old Australians*  
*In our own land rank as aliens?*  
*Banish bans and conquer caste,*  
*Then we'll win our own at last (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 41-44).*

The lines *Must we native Old Australians in our own land rank as aliens?* are questioning the lives of Aboriginal people as their land is seized and being alienated from their 'home'. Their connection with the land is not only about as the resources for their lives, but it is crucially important for their religious beliefs as most of their cultural practices are linked to the sacred land. Thereby, the Aboriginal people believe that their true home is in the land of Australia, they belong to the land as it is where their ancestors are. However, the British colonization had ruined the Aborigines' lives since they had no attachment to land and only made it into a business field.

By considering that subaltern groups are the tools from a hegemony practice that symbolizes political, social, and even cultural dominance by a superior group. It can be connected with the British colonization against Aboriginal people. Seeing how they are forcing Aboriginal people to leave their lands by diseases and massacres, destroying their beliefs by spreading Christianity, and ruining the chain of pure Aboriginal descent generations by the assimilation, the term subaltern can be separated from them. Moreover, the term used by Oodgeroo, 'a dying race' is inevitably has been aimed to the helpless Aborigines.

## 2. Subaltern as the Voiceless Party in Oodgeroo's Selected Poems.

The main problem in the study of subalterns is not only concerning about the categories of people who are oppressed or the oppressed working class, but also about anyone whose voice is limited by the access that try to represent it. The problem that must be emphasized in the subaltern initiated by Spivak actually refers to anyone who does not have freedom to speak or express themselves. Which means, those people always represented by the dominance of the discourse of power, especially in the post-colonial context.

In this case, the researcher finds the words that represent the voiceless subaltern in the selected poems. Such as in the first stanza of *We Are Going*, written below:

*They came in to the little town  
A semi-naked band subdued and silent  
All that remained of their tribe. (We Are Going, line 1-3).*

The words *subdued* and *silent* represent Aboriginal people as the voiceless who can not speak and fight for their rights under the British domination. When the British began to seize their land, the Aborigines actually attempted to speak and resist but then they were tortured and killed cruelly. Since then, the Aboriginal considered as the weak and dying race with the fact that they were dealing with British who held a strong dominant position in the world in the eighteen century for their advanced technology, seafaring, and great military.

Another words that represent the voiceless can be found in one of the stanzas in *The Dispossessed*. In this stanza, the lines show how the Aboriginal people are

being oppressed as their land is seized and they can not defend it, the words are written below:

*The white man claimed your hunting grounds  
and you could not remain.  
They made you work as menials  
for greedy private gain; (The Dispossessed, line 9-12).*

The words *you could not remain* clearly clarify the position of Aboriginal people as a weak party who can not defend themselves. The Aborigines are silenced in both of their voice of the claim of their seized rights and their physical resistance which have been decisively defeated by advanced weapons that even the Aborigines have never seen before.

Subaltern itself is a position of ‘without identity’ where they have no room to voice their voices. By this reason, the privileged people are there with the intention to narrate and representing the group. However, most of the voices are always ethically manipulated as part of the political practice of a group to dominate. In this case, Aboriginal people are deliberately made to be unable to speak on their own so they need privileged parties to be intermediaries for their voices. However, it ends up with misrepresentation and makes them always in the ‘cage’ of representation.

### **3. The Resistance of Subaltern in Oodgeroo’s Selected Poems.**

As mentioned before, the term of subaltern is in position of have no room to voice their voices, so that the privileged people are needed to represent the group. Gayatri C. Spivak herself argues that subaltern must speak for themselves. They must be the master of their own voice so they can stop for being subaltern.

However, since the subaltern have no power to speak, Spivak challenges the privileged people and intellectuals who should act more in real terms to fight for subaltern groups rather than just think or talk. Spivak points out to those who are needed to speak for the subaltern must establishing a strong and positive moral relationship with the subalterns so they can have knowledge of the subaltern's views. She argues that there must be an interaction between privileged class and the subaltern to enable the representation.

However, Oodgeroo Noonuccal shows the reality in one of the stanzas from *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*. It illustrates how the privileged classes who are actually having enough power to help the Aborigines from the predicaments but instead they betrayed the Aborigines and do not care about the circumstances of the Aborigines who expect their help. The lines put sarcasm towards those who should help and defend the Aborigines:

*You dishearten, not defend us,*  
*Circumscribe, who should befriend us.*  
*Give us welcome, not aversion,*  
*Give us choice, not cold coercion,*  
*Status, not discrimination,*  
*Human rights, not segregation. (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 21-26).*

The lines *You dishearten, not defend us* and *Circumscribe, who should befriend* seem to question the parties who should have power to help them to defend themselves. However, the great power and influence of British at that time, precisely attract many parties choose to side with them. In this case, as mentioned before, The Aboriginal Protection Act is one of the parties that decide to side colonial government. They declared to give Aboriginal people protection in

dealing with British colonization, but instead they give the British the power to seize the land.

Furthermore, Oodgeroo also shows the resistance of Aboriginal people as the subaltern group through her ridicule, satire, and provocative words against the British colonists' atrocities on their peaceful land. Such as in the lines from *The Dispossessed*:

*When Churches mean a way of life,  
as Christians proudly claim (The Dispossessed, line 25-26).*

Furthermore, the lines from *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*:

*You the law, like Roman Pontius,  
You devout Salvation-sellers (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 27 & 37).*

The lines mentioned above show Oodgeroo's ridicule and satire toward British colonists. As one of their agendas, the British were trying to spread their religion, Christianity which cannot be accepted by the Aborigines. Christianity is too much different from their beliefs in the matter god. They are not praying to a specific god, the Aborigines believe in various forms of gods which portrayed in obvious way such as rock, plant, or even animal.

In this case, Oodgeroo throws mockery against Christianity which the British colonialists were proud of as the form of her resistances as an Aborigine. The use of metaphor *You the law, like Roman Pontius* throws a great mockery as Roman Pontius is the person who gave the order for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Then, for the line *You devout Salvation-sellers* seems to be Oodgeroo's satire towards

the agenda of spreading Christianity in Aborigines' land like a seller who sells merchandise.

Beside that, Oodgeroo also shows the other forms of the Aborigines' resistances by using provoking words in the closing lines of *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*:

*Banish bans and conquer caste,  
Then we'll win our own at last (Aboriginal Charter of Rights, line 43-44).*

This line seems to gain the confidence and courage of Aboriginal people to continue to fight for their rights and dignity as the indigenous of Australia land, as many of their fighters were killed in the rebellion and resistance movement over the land conflicts. The resistance of Aborigines as subaltern group also can be connected to the six points designed by Antonio Gramsci in order to learn about subalterns which mentioned in the previous chapter. The fifth point, new formations that maintain the autonomy of subaltern groups within the old framework, and the sixth point, formations which can help to affirm their entire autonomy can be related with the struggle of the Aboriginal people in defending all that left and can still be remained. As Behrendt (2012) states in her *Indigenous Australia For Dummies*:

By the late 1880s, colonisation had been occurring for more than a century in the south-eastern part of Australia. Aboriginal people across the country were navigating their new environment but remained steadfast in their resistance to the claims made by the British over their land and the control colonial governments sought to exert over their lives. Aboriginal resistance and political activism became more sophisticated, with Aboriginal people asserting through letters and petitions, their claims to equal rights as citizens and their claims to land. (p. 147)

## **C. The Relation between Subalternity in the History of Aborigines and in Oodgeroo's Selected Poems**

In this section, the researcher provides the relation between Subalternity in the history of Aboriginal people and Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. The researcher connects the portrayal of Aboriginal people as the subaltern group in the Oodgeroo's selected poems with the situation of the Aboriginal people in the colonization time.

### **1. Subalternity in the History of the Aborigines**

In this section, the researcher shows the history of British colonization and the effects against the Aboriginal people as subaltern group. At the day when the first arrival of British colonists, a group of Aboriginal people are gathering and fishing as usual, then they see the big white ship of British colonists that slowly approaching their cove. As seeing a group of white people wearing the type of clothing and weaponry that they had never seen as a threat, the group threw the ship with spears. The lieutenant James Cook then responds them with a shot which eventually wounded one man. The shooting then shocked the group and made them run away from the area, and at that very moment the British set foot on the land of Australia. After successfully meet and discuss with representatives from the Aboriginal people, the British then began to inhabit and build camps at the agreed border.

Seeing the indigenous people of the land are not strong enough to fight them, the British started to mark their movements to seize the land by spreading the declaration of the term of unhabited land or well known as *terra nullius* to the land. Then, the colonial government started to establish and spread their people from the initial boundaries and then pushed off the Aboriginal people from the land slowly. As the colonists established, Aboriginal people are started being pushed off from their own land. They started to lose their livelihoods, their cultural practices, and their family.

Physical conflict occurred between the colonists and Aboriginal people who try to speak to resist and defend their tribe and the land, but ended in the massacres and separation of women and children from their families. Desai (2015) states that James Cook claimed he wanted peaceful relationship with the Aborigines. However, the fact showed that from the beginning of their settlement, the British had a bad impression of Aboriginal people. In this case, the British colonists are actually not the first settlers that stay over in Australian land and the Aboriginal people are always welcoming them without any problems or conflicts. Nevertheless, the problems arise when accepting the arrival of the British is actually such a big mistake for the Aboriginal people since it ends in great misery for their lives.

Since the British colonists are always considering themselves as the better race, they did not want to respect the land and the way of Aboriginal life. The land treated as the source of their wealth and they assumed the Aborigines are just a group of barbaric and primitive people. In this case, the Aboriginal people are the

marginalized party in their own land under the domination of British, the superior party. The domination continued to make the indigenous people as an oppressed community under the laws established by their colonial government and forced the Aboriginal people to comply the laws. The strong domination around them led to the difficulties of the Aborigines to speak and to get justice for their lives.

In her ideas, Spivak considered subaltern as the party who never speak because they do not have the opportunity to voice their voices. Even when they are given the opportunity to speak, there are always parties who claim themselves as the intermediaries to speak on behalf of subaltern. In the other words, the lives of those who considered as the subalterns are can not be separated from the representations and misrepresentations by the party who hold the domination or superiority.

In this case, the Aboriginal people inevitably end up being subalterns as the voiceless since the beginning of the British occupation. In the moment when the British began to seize their land after the first settlement, the Aborigines attempted to speak and resist but then they were killed and treated inhumanely. Since then, the Aboriginal considered as the weak and dying race with the fact that they were dealing with British colonists who held a strong dominant position.

The Aboriginal people can not really voice their voices as the colonized party. Their voices and demands are can not be heard because of many parties deliberately manipulating their voices. It is stated by Desai (2015) that The Aboriginal Protection Act (1869) claimed themselves as the protector of

Aboriginal people, but instead give the power to colonial government to seize the land, home, and children from the Aborigines. The expected protection aspect of the law covered almost all of the abuses and injustices toward Aboriginal people.

As marginalized and silenced group, the fate of subalterns are tend to be ignored and even forgotten. Being ignored in the context of life exacerbates the predicaments experienced by the subalterns who do not have the strength and access to show their true selves due to the strong dominance of the superior party. In this case, the Aboriginal people also experience how their lives are not considered as something important to the British colonists. The existence of Aboriginal people is only considered as an inferior race that can only be exploited by their labour to work for them.

The lives of Aboriginal people seemed to always be underestimated by the British colonists. This is proven by how the population of Aboriginal people was rapidly decreasing due to the separation of children and women, intentional slaughter, and diseases that spread by the colonists. For the example is the small-pox epidemic spread through around Sydney in 1789 and led to the death almost half of the Aboriginal population. The physical conflict that also led to more death caused by the massacres, about more than 10,000 were killed between 1824 until 1908. Before the colonization, the population of Aborigines was approximated to be 15,500 then decreased until only around 2,341 in 1861.

Furthermore, As the group of people who are oppressed and surrounded by representations and misrepresentations, the subalterns certainly experienced

considerable difficulties in fighting the justice for their rights. In this case, the Aboriginal people find it difficult to achieve justice for their stolen rights as the indigenous people because of the British domination which at the time seemed to close all access to justice.

One of the examples is how the remaining Aboriginal people were not included in the Australian population census until 1900s. The census considered not attempting to include the Aborigines who were stayed outside the settlements. Furthermore, the national referendum in 1967 finally voted to change the Constitution to require the Aboriginal people to be included in the Australian census. The 1967 referendum seemed to be one of the landmarks for Aboriginal people which marked the achievements of their struggle in fighting their rights.

Moreover, Aboriginal people are oppressed in all aspects of their lives, from emotional, mental, social, to their spiritual which affect the lives of the remaining Aborigines in the future. As is known, the effects that attack the colonized party in psychological and social aspects will tend to last a long time and continue to haunt throughout their lives. In this case, the Aboriginal people as the oppressed and colonized party have psychological and social effects such as stress, depression, trauma, racism, and also discrimination. The Aboriginal people inevitably can not be free from those things easily.

The psychologically oppression experienced by the Aboriginal people, especially the young generations at the time of colonization is mostly caused by the massacres and the separation of women and children from their families. As

the conflict of the land arises, the coercion to comply the colonial government's laws, and legalization for shooting aboriginal people is the period where the murder can be occurred and be seen whenever and wherever. Witnessing the people of their tribe and even their family being killed cruelly certainly gave severe trauma to the remaining Aborigines.

Furthermore, the separation of the children from their family or well known as The Stolen Generation happened around 1890s until 1970s also take a role to give psychologically oppression towards the young generation. The children are separated from their family without any promise they would see and back to their families again. According to Creative Spirit (2014), since 1883 until 1969 it is approximated that more than 6,200 Aboriginal children were stolen. These children are restrained by the rules that strictly prohibit them from speaking in Aboriginal language. The British tried to end the chain of pure Aboriginal generations by indoctrinating the children so they would not act like Aboriginal people and some were adopted to white families. The British intentionally oppressing the Aboriginal young generation psychologically, so they can forget their identity as the Aborigines and ruin the future of Aboriginal people. Because of the agenda of The Stolen Generation, the children were questioning their true identity, experiencing trauma and low self-esteem.

Meanwhile, the Aboriginal women also faced terrible predicaments during the British colonization. The women as subaltern is much more silenced compared to men. Spivak considered women who are included in a colonized party will more difficult to speak out remembering that women are seen as the weakest

community. A report in 1990 showed that Aboriginal women were enslaved and handed over from station to station to serve the British colonists. The Aboriginal women are taken from their families and husbands by force and were treated as sex dolls and then ended up being abandoned to rot away with sexually transmitted disease. The innocent women must experience inhumane treatments such as physical, mental, and also sexual violence until they are left to die at the end.

Furthermore, the socially oppression experienced by the Aborigines is mostly caused by the untrue stories and statements spread by the British colonists about the indigenous people. The untrue stories such as how violent, savage, and scary the Aboriginal people are or the statement tells that Aboriginal people are lazy, these prejudices seem to be hereditary and form negative stereotypes of Aboriginal people. That is why, the remaining Aboriginal people must get unpleasant treatments just because they are people with Aboriginal descent, even that still happens in the twentieth century. As Paradies et al. (2008) states that a survey conducted in 2001 found approximately 30 per cent of Indigenous people mentioned discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. Some research in Australia also have shown that indigenous people who living in the cities, others who were members of the Stolen Generation, or those who identified as Aborigines are more likely to experience racism (Paradies et al., 2008).

## 2. Subalternity in Oodgeroo's Selected Poems

The selected poems of Oodgeroo Noonuccal entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* portray the British domination led the Aboriginal to be the subaltern group. As an Aboriginal woman, Oodgeroo herself experiences unfairly treatment because of her identity as Aborigine. In her 16 years old, she wants to pursue her dream as a nurse but ended being rejected in the first training with the reason of her Aboriginality. Since then, Oodgeroo decided to join the movements that fight the Aborigines rights and demand for the justice such as the Australian Communist party in 1961 and the Queensland State Council until 1970.

As she found the hard fight to get the demands of her people, Oodgeroo starts to write poetry to express her anger and disappointment as an Aborigine. Until in 1964 Oodgeroo successfully publishing her first poetry collection entitled *We Are Going*. Her first poetry collection met a great success since it helps people outside Aboriginal to see the great predicaments of Aboriginal people as the indigenous of Australian land caused by the British domination. Her poetry is full with the portrayal of strong sentiment related to the injustice and stolen rights of the Aboriginal people. Oodgeroo then commits to use her writing as the weapon to voice her voiceless people.

The relation between the subalternity in the history of Aboriginal people and in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* is the position of Aboriginal people as

the oppressed and voiceless party under British colonization. The consideration of Aboriginal people as the oppressed and voiceless party caused the term of 'the dying race' which mentioned in Oodgeroo's selected poems both implicitly and explicitly, inevitably becomes the term that sticks to Aboriginal people because of the misery they experienced as the effects of the British colonization.

In this case, it can be said that Oodgeroo Noonuccal is successfully voice her Aboriginal people who are in subaltern position. As considering the fact that Oodgeroo herself is an Aboriginal descent and do not have privileged social background, her poems that illustrate and voice the predicaments of Aboriginal people is based on the fact of what Aboriginal people experienced and not a misrepresentation. She writes the poetry to speak directly in order to express her disappointment and demands of the justice for her dying tribe.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The fourth chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions related to the Subaltern portrayals in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems.

#### 4.1 Conclusion

Based on what has been described in the finding and discussion section of this study, the researcher provides the conclusion in the matter of subaltern portrayals in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems and to find the relation between subalternity in the history of the Aborigines and in the selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed*. To achieve those objectives, this study applies Spivakian Subaltern theory by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and New Historicism approach.

The result of the study shows the portrayal of subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* related to the superior domination and the effect, subaltern as the voiceless party, and the resistance of subaltern. The first finding in *The Superior Domination and the Effects in the Selected Poems*, show that the British superiority led to their domination against Aboriginal people as the weaker party. It is resulting the great predicaments for the Aboriginal people who must lose their rights as human also as the indigenous of the land. The lives of the Aborigines are

seen as something unimportant and end up treated cruelly continuously. As the effects of the colonization, the Aboriginal people inevitably have to leave their sacred land since they can not fight back and reach the justice of their rights, they become 'alien' in their own land. Beside that, the remaining Aboriginal people also must deal with the negative stereotypes, unfair and unpleasant treatments, depression, and trauma as the effects of British domination.

Secondly, Subaltern as the Voiceless Party in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems show how the Aboriginal people must live surrounding by representations and misrepresentations of the privileged parties who hold domination that makes it more difficult for them to get their rights. As subaltern, the Aboriginal people become a group who never speak or the voiceless, since they do not have the opportunity to voice their voices and their real voices can not be heard. Lastly, The Resistance of Subaltern in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems which illustrate how the Aborigines as subaltern put up resistance in order to defend whatever belong to them which forcibly taken by the British colonialists. After the initial resistance that culminated in violent conflict which killed many Aborigines, those who remained are united and continued to fight for what had been seized and to get recognition of their existence as indigenous people of Australia land.

This research also provides the relation between the subalternity in the history of Aboriginal people and in Oodgeroo Noonuccal's selected poems entitled *We Are Going*, *Aboriginal Charter of Rights*, and *The Dispossessed* in the matter of Aboriginal people who positioned as the oppressed and voiceless party under British colonization. Additionally, this research also revealed that Oodgeroo

Noonuccal is successfully speak for the Aboriginal people, the colonized race that considered as the subaltern. This is supported with the fact that she is an Aboriginal woman that can be said she is a subaltern woman who writes poetry to voice her people with demands for justice and equality.

#### 4.2 Suggestion

The result of this research can be supported by other analysis applying psychological or sociological approach, or other approach can be related with the effects of colonization for the colonized party. Furthermore, the analysis using another theories such as race theory or other theories related to social and humanity is highly recommended by the present researcher. The last suggestion, as considering that this research focuses on subaltern issues, the further researchers can use racism, discrimination, and political views in analyzing the poems.

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