

The Women Poet: Exploring the Existence of Women and Feminist Values from the Song of Songs 3:1-5

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Kata Kunci: <i>Eksistensi perempuan, Puisi cinta, Penyair Perempuan, Kidung Agung, Nilai moral</i>	Abstrak Bukankah manusia diciptakan sama? dalam setiap situasi, mereka sama dalam situasi apa pun. Manusia adalah makhluk sosial yang selalu bergantung pada kelompok dan tidak dapat hidup sendiri secara maksimal. Secara biologis, manusia diklasifikasikan berdasarkan jenis kelamin dalam dua bentuk, yaitu laki-laki (laki-laki) dan perempuan (perempuan). Baik laki-laki maupun perempuan, manusia masih memiliki kesadaran yang sama untuk mengekspresikan eksistensinya dalam masyarakat. Namun kesadaran untuk menerima keberadaan (existence) itu didasarkan pada beberapa syarat. Alkitab adalah tempat untuk menggambarkan keberadaan perempuan dalam masyarakat dari segi agama (Kristen). Perempuan selalu menjadi objek dan tidak memiliki eksistensi yang sama dengan laki-laki, yang dulunya didasarkan pada kesadaran publik (yang sangat patriarki). Salah satu puisi cinta, Kidung Agung, mencatat keberadaan wanita dan menggambarkan dengan jelas bahwa wanita memiliki keberadaan yang unik dalam masyarakat pada saat penulisan Alkitab bahkan sebelum Yesus. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan eksistensi perempuan di Kidung Agung dengan menggunakan pendekatan kritik sastra feminis sebagai penulis. Penulis ingin menekankan bahwa puisi “Mimpi Mempelai Wanita” dalam Kidung Agung 3:1-5 ditulis oleh seorang wanita. Pada akhirnya, tulisan ini akan memberikan nilai-nilai moral bagi perempuan masa kini.
Keyword: <i>Existence of women, Love poetry, Woman Poet, Song of Songs, Moral values</i>	Abstract <i>Aren't humans created equally? in every situation, they are equal whatever the situation. Humans are social creatures who always depend on groups and cannot live alone to the fullest. Biologically, humans are classified based on sex in two forms, namely male (male) and female (female). Both men and women, humans still</i>

	<i>have the same awareness to express their existence in society. However, the awareness to accept existence (existence) is based on several conditions. The Bible is a place to describe the existence of women in society in terms of religion (Christianity). Women have always been objects and do not have the same existence as men, which was once based on public awareness (which was very patriarchal). One of the love poems, the Song of Solomon, records the existence of women and describes it clearly that women had a unique existence in society at the time of the writing of the Bible even before Jesus. This paper aims to explain the existence of women in Kidung Agung using a feminist literary criticism approach as a writer. The author would like to emphasize that the poem “Dream of the Bride” in Song of Solomon 3:1-5 was written by a woman. In the end, this paper will provide moral values for women today.</i>
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Introduction

Society in the post-modern era creates various forms of discourse about human rights deviations. Inequality in the recognition of gender equality is one part of human rights deviations that have no end in resolution (Bieler & Morton, 2021). The general public also takes part in discussing gender inequalities and contributes to gender inequalities that affect various aspects of human life (Dabrowski, 2021), and apart from that, religion also contributes to gender inequality. Christianity has become a vehicle for the production of gender inequality, which has persisted from ancient times to this post-modern era. However, with the development of science and the progress of civilization, many alternative means are used to solve the problem of inequality in gender equality promoted by Christian feminist fighters, but these facilities are still not universally and entirely accepted by the entire world community, especially countries that respect the teachings of the Abrahamic religion.

The social dynamics of contemporary society (urban and local) in developing countries (countries that uphold the Abrahamic religion) still maintain patriarchal culture as a legacy. Countries that hold fast to Abrahamic religions become countries of production of strong patriarchal culture. In Jewish (Israel) culture, women are considered as male companions and have full responsibilities in domestic spaces such as taking care of the household, bearing children, and continuing generations. Meanwhile, men are tasked with regulating the regulations and dynamics of development in public spaces (Feess et al., 2021). Women are

prohibited from managing public affairs, let alone interfering in decision-making and community management. Because of this, girls in Israel and countries in the Middle East were forbidden from going to school in the days before the Bible was written even after the Bible was written. In addition, the way of life of women in society is regulated by men. For the Jewish community and some Middle Eastern community groups, awareness of the existence of women in the public sphere is considered a deviation from the rules. Because of this, women always get unfair treatment in patriarchal societies that are carried out both by men and also by patriarchal women (Simamora, 2021). Unfortunately, religious people regard it as part of the expression of faith and the practice of moral values inherited from parents.

The author sees that human rights aberration happens to women (collectively in the world) because of old-fashioned ideas that come from world religions specifically Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Society starts the deviation by claiming that God is male. This thought developed among Christians by claiming that Jesus as the savior was born into the world as a male. Jesus did not play a role in writing the Bible, but Jesus had a big role in creating moral values for the lives of his followers who were poured into the Bible. I realized that women in the period before Jesus, the time together with Jesus, and the time after Jesus experienced deviations of human rights through physical and abstract actions. One of the deviations depicted in the dynamics of the Christian life is the existence of women who should be equal to men in writing the scriptures. Many great female characters have similar names, even removals from the Bible. One of the things that have not been resolved by theologians is the source of the subject of writings in the Bible which are addressed to men and are purely derived from female voices such as the literary works in the Song of Songs. Do the love poems contained in the Song of Songs also come from men? Logically, for men who live in a patriarchal culture and have awareness of the existence of men more than women are impossible to voice women's voices in literary works contained in the holy book.

The Song of Songs as a literary book records several literary works that are romantic and pure containing the voices of Israeli women who lived before Jesus. This literary work is rarely read and used by Christians in public worship. However, this book is unique, because some scribes state that this book is the work of men. Unfortunately, when I claim that all the authors of this book are women, the universe will be excited and debate this issue. I believe that in the time before, with, and after Jesus, many intelligent women wanted to contribute to the

writing of the Bible even if not many. But they are constrained by a strongly patriarchal culture. The history of Judaism and Christianity never records that women also participated in writing and the scriptures. Therefore, this paper will recognize the personal right to write the Song of Songs and even declare it as the poems of Song of Songs 3:1-5.

Broadly speaking, this paper aims to show that basically, women in society have the same capabilities as men in work. Patriarchal discourses that limit women's work in society should be broken by proving that since ancient times, women have also had the same space in society, but were limited by patriarchal constructions. If currently the proof of the writing of the Bible is only dominated by men, then this paper wants to show that women are the source of the writing of the Bible which refers specifically to matters relating to love. So, this paper comes to identify various pieces of evidence of women as poets, the boundaries of this paper do not show women as Bible writers. However, this paper aims to explore the existence of women as a poet and even revealers of love poetry in the Song of Songs 3: 1-5. This masterpiece also tries to reveal many feminist values and bring us to remember women's existence in the bible.

Method

This writing uses the method of Feminist Literary Criticism as a writer popularized by Eliane Showalter. Showalter proposes two approaches to feminist literary criticism (women as writers and women as readers) to assess literary works related to women and uncover deviations against women's rights but also analyze the meaning of women's works. This writing method is a literary writing method that aims to assess the results of literary works, especially in novels and poetry. Many literary researchers use this research method in assessing and reviewing novels. However, special for this writing, this method will be used to analyze women's works in the form of poetry and evaluate the results of this literature using a feminist theological view. On the other side, it will help to express awareness of the existence of women in the patriarchal society and to state the ability of women as poets in the world of literature and Christianity that has never been seen before, never been recognized and also debated.

Findings and Discussion

1. Women's Existence vs. Patriarchal Existence:

Theories of existence are widespread in human life, especially in the social dynamics of society. Sigmund Freud (1886-1939) is one of the developers of the theory of existence who is well-known among psychologists and the world in its development period until now. He developed an analysis of the individual's conscious (conscious), preconscious (preconscious), and unconscious (unconscious) which is shown through attitudes and behavior. These behaviors and attitudes will have an impact on social dynamics in society (Erwin, 2019; Sibi, 2019). Humans live in the three levels of psychology that Freud intended to represent human existence. Existence is supported by the surrounding environment and is accounted for by each in the community. Humans (women and men) who are still breathing are categorized as living things that move and can implement existence (existence) because they are aware of the dynamics of life (Učník, 2021). They will struggle to make the surrounding environment aware of their existence as living objects (Vlcek, 2020). Individual existence will continue with social existence. In the realm of social existence, the existence or existence of a person in society is highly dependent on the collective consciousness.

Social existence theory is concerned with how individuals conceptualize their existence in the social world, learn from others, and communicate with others (Devlin et al., 2021). social existence can be illustrated by the existence of groups (a combination of several individuals). Community groups or communities provide opportunities for the preparation of community rules which are the guides for the existence of each individual in society. People live in groupings based on various factors, but the most influencing factor in the social life dynamics is the gender factor. Gender as a community construction is formed in society to differentiate between people based on sex, either biological results or the results of community construction (Launius & Hassel, 2021). Society's construction of gender is very focused on gender differences based on sex (biological sex), namely women and men. Masculinity and feminization are very influential in the formation of societal norms and rules (Pamuk, 2021).

Some countries that uphold Abrahamic religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism produce many patriarchal values for society (Handoyo, 2020). Many researchers that focus on the application of patriarchal values argue that women have weaknesses in various ways, women are limited in expression, and even men limit the space for women's special movement in the field of education and movement in the public sphere. The existence of patriarchal culture in religious countries (especially in Abrahamic religions) is very high and

strong (Kamazima et al., 2021). Early Christianity to the present day is closely related to discrimination about gender and specifically against women. Many views explain broadly the position of women who are dominated by men. The predominance of the male role in public life at the time of the writing of the Bible was an inaccessible nature to Jewish culture. Because of this, many Bible stories illustrate the general weakness of women's power in the eyes of men and society. Some examples of Patriarchal existence described in the Bible can be identified as follows:

1. Eve the first sinner (Gen. 3: 1-24)
2. Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, who was sexually abused by Hamor (Gen. 34:1 – 40:23)
3. Hagar the Egyptian woman who was expelled by Sarah (Gen. 16:1-16)
4. Abigail the woman who saw her husband's faults (I Sam. 25:23-39)
5. Michal the wife of David and son of Saul was given to Palti son of Lais (I Sam. 44)
6. Tamar the woman who was raped by her brother Amnon (II Sam 13:1-22)
7. Bathsheba the wife of Uriah whom David took (II Sam. 11:1-5)
8. The blaspheming woman who was stoned (John 7:53 - 8:11)
9. Syrophenesian woman who asked Jesus for help (Mark 7:24-30)

Some forms of discrimination in the Bible are implemented by several stories of direct and indirect violence against women. This violence is perpetrated by men against women but also by patriarchal women against ordinary women. In addition to the examples above, there are still many forms of undetected violence and discrimination against women that take place in the traditions of Israel and countries in the Middle East. One of the most visible patriarchal forms is that women have never been recorded as the highest holders of the throne in royal leadership. The first king until now been dominated by men. This shows that the existence of patriarchy is very strong in the implementation of the life of the Israelites. Even in the development of Christianity, women were forced to submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24). This verse is the basis of the marriage of millions of Christian marriages that direct attention to women to take place in people's lives to present.

The perspective of feminist theology and liberation theology of the feminist movement is present in the development of Christianity to oppose patriarchal culture that produces continuous discrimination and various forms of violence as a result of human rights violations (Afandi, 2021). In this case, feminist theology provides space for women to express their

aspirations and voice the existence of women who are equal to men consciously in Christianity. Feminist theology fighters try to reveal various forms of women's existence that are consciously or unconsciously written in the Bible. Some female figures in the Bible are introduced as a form of female existence in the Bible are as follows:

1. Deborah, a Judge of Israel (Judg. 4:4);
2. Naomi, a Strong Widow (Ruth 1:7-15);
3. Ruth, dutiful woman (Ruth 1:16);
4. Queen Esther, intelligent woman (Esther 7:1-10); 5);
5. Hannah, a faithful and obedient woman (1 Sam. 1:19-20); 6);
6. Abigail, the wise woman (1 Samuel 25:23-25);
7. Mary the Mother of Jesus, the woman with gifts (Matt. 1:21);
8. Elisabeth, a faithful and cheerful woman (Luke 1:45);
9. Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus, the wise woman (Luke 10:38-42);
10. Mary Magdalene, the woman who knew Jesus rose the first time (Matt. 28:1-10).
11. Even some contemporary Christian feminist theology states that the author of the Song of Songs is a woman (Natar, 2016).

The existence shown in the previous examples illustrates how women also have a strong existence in society. However, the existence of women who are recorded in the Bible turns out to be motivated by male names. Many women in the Israelite tradition are well-known precisely for bringing the names of men (grandfather, father, son, brother, relative, respected person, and husband) into their lives. This is one of the subtle forms of patriarchy that is not realized and is carried out continuously in the lives of Christians to this day. The existence of women in the Bible will still be dominated by patriarchal existence.

2. Female Poet of Song of Songs 3:1-5:

A strong patriarchal culture in the life of Christians opens a portal of feminism to clarify the existence of women in Christianity. There is a lot of evidence showing that the existence of women in the Bible is dominated and motivated by patriarchal culture. However, it is possible to clarify and explore news summaries in biblical writing (especially the Song of Songs). The interpretation of the Song of Songs during the canonization of the Bible points to the relationship between God and his chosen people, Israel (Kaplan & Wilson-Wright, 2018)

because this book was written by Solomon and is recognized as one of the books of wisdom. However, recent research states that the Song of Songs contains many expressions of love that reveal the understanding of love not as a percussion thing. It is a grace and establishes a lot of happy life (Tiwery Yudit, 2015; Cooper, 2020). Every expression of love between men and women which is erotic in the style of metaphor and personification forms the lyrics of love, so this book is called a book of poetry and is not too good to be called a wisdom book (Hagedorn, 2021; Prabowo, 2020; Liu, 2020).

Various initial speculations emerged and stated that the author of the book of Kidung Agung was Solomon or a male poet who had a feminist spirit (Natar, 2016). But logically Solomon does not deserve to be called the author of the Song of Songs, someone who has a feminist spirit. Some evidence suggests that Solomon had a bad treatment of love and specifically he also had a bad treatment of women. He married 700 women from the nobility to expand the bilateral kingdom of Israel with other nations and 300 concubines whom he married in other countries where he traveled on business. A total of 1000 women were married by Solomon (1 Kings 11:3). Solomon was unfaithful to women, and from his marriage to 1000 women, it can be seen that Solomon was never serious about love. Solomon was wise in commanding the kingdom, but he was not wise in creating loyalty and love. The Bible does not mention the names of the women Solomon married specifically, but, certainly, Solomon could not have shared his love with 1000 women. Therefore, Solomon does not fit to be called the author of the Song of Songs.

There are many opinions about the feminist theological view which states that the author of the Song of Songs is biologically female. Song of Songs 3:1-5 as a whole is a poem written by a poet (poet) who does not want to be named. According to Athalya Brenner, the poem is most likely a woman's perspective, even the work of a woman (Brenner, 2001). Brenner's statement needs to be considered in determining the poet or poet in Song of Songs 3:1-5. Brenner did not specify the gender of the poet of the Song of Songs. Brenner's main problem is a critique of the traditional pattern adopted at the time of writing the Song of Songs. But in principle, he stated that most likely, the Song of Songs was written from a women's perspective.

According to J.A. Telsoni, from 117 verses, 61.5 verses are voiced by women, 40 verses are voiced by men, 6.5 verses are voiced by one group and 9 verses are voiced by others. The author is described as a contrasting figure with Solomon (Telsoni, 2015). According to Asnat

Niwa Natar's opinion, sometimes the Song of Songs poetry shows itself as a man (Song of 1:9), but more often as a woman (Song of 8:1) or a group of girls identified as daughters of Jerusalem (Song of Songs). 5:16) and not married. In this book, women are more active in expressing love than men. Although there is a male view in it, the view is voiced by a female. This is in stark contrast to the patriarchal culture of Israeli society. Therefore, the Song of Songs can be accepted as a critique of the patriarchal system of society (Song of Songs 1:6; 3:1-5; 5:2-6; 3; 8:8-10).

Song of Songs 3:1 – 5 clearly describes the voice of the Israelite woman about love. In this one article, women are used as central figures who tell their experiences of expressing love to their idol. This woman clearly stated her existence. The Hebrew translation and the Indonesian translation both show that all the expressions of love in the form of poetry are the work of women. If the woman is not a writer then she is most likely the poem of the poem. The author of different poems or poems shares the story in this writing with the author of the Song of Songs from the Old Testament. The poet of Song of Songs 3:1-5 is the author of the material whose results are collected and recorded in a book known as the Song of Songs. The poet of the poem in the Song of Songs as a whole cannot be forced as a woman. However, in Song of Songs 3:1-5, the perspective of women is very highlighted. A competent writer is a writer who writes something based on facts.

The poet of Song of Songs 3:1–5 implies several things about achievement. First, the achievements are for women because they contain many elements of feminism, and the whole article is written specifically about women. Second, the point of view used by the poet is female. This is shown from the role of the main character of the poem, namely a woman who expresses her feelings and experiences. Third, the role of men is not prominent in this poem. Each of the men depicted does not have a comprehensive role, but on the contrary (the man and the city patrollers) are depicted as silent and voiceless characters, as well as characters who do not respect women. The most effective reason for determining the gender of a singer is that every writer writes well when he has experiences and feelings that match the content of his writing. This means that Song of Songs 3:1-5 is one of the women's literary works written by women. Natar supports the statement of women as writers of this poem. One of the interesting things in the Song of Songs as written by women is that women's voices are conveyed in a monologue in the form of love songs. This is in contrast to Ruth and Esther's books, where a woman's voice

is conveyed to the reader through the narrator. In other words, voicing for themselves what is experienced and experienced by women, and is not represented by men. The expressions were even demonstrated openly, explicitly, and frankly.

3. Women's Literature

The poet of Song of Songs 3:1-5 describes some of the values contained in this poem, which are expressed and expressed.

1st Verse

על-מִשְׁכָּבִי בַלַּיְלוֹת בִּקְשָׁתִי אֶת שְׁאֵהָבָה נִפְשִׁי בִקְשָׁתִיו וְלֹא מָצָאתִיו:

(‘al-misykavi balelot biqasyti ‘et sye’ava nafsyi biqasythi’ welo’ metsa’thiw.)

Song of Songs 3:1 according to the Net Bible translation is All night in my bed, I miss my lover. I miss him but he never shows up." In this verse, the poet wants to emphasize that she is a woman who has been looking for her lover for a long time.

2nd Verse

אֶלְוִמָּה נָא וְאֶסֹבֶבָה בְּעִיר בְּשֹׁנִים וּבְרַחֲבוֹת אֲבָקֶשָׁה אֶת שְׁאֵהָבָה
נִפְשִׁי בִקְשָׁתִיו וְלֹא מָצָאתִיו:

(‘aqumâ na’ve’âsovevâ ba’ir basywaqim ubarkhobot ‘abaq°syâ ‘et sye’ahavâ nafsyi biqasythi’ welo’ metsa’thiw.)

Song of Songs 3:2 based on the Net Bible translation is I will appear and look around the city, and along the streets and squares; I will find my lover." I looked for him but I couldn't find him. This array wants to explain how to find the soulmate who can't be found, but he doesn't give up and keeps looking.

3rd Verse

מִצְאוֹנִי הַשְּׂמֵרִים הַסֹּבְבִים בְּעִיר אֶת שְׁאֵהָבָה נִפְשִׁי רְאִיתָם:

(metsa’uni hasysomerim hassobybim ba’ir ‘et sye’ ahavâ nafsyi ry°item.)

Song of Songs 3: 3 in the Net Bible translation is The watchman found me, the people who guard the city walls. "Have you seen my lover?" This line wants to emphasize that in-depth he met the city watchmen patrollers (hassobybim bar) and he was ignored by them. This verse explains how the city patrols discriminated against the woman. Discrimination that is done is discrimination through actions.

4th Verse

כִּמְעַט שְׁעַבְרָתִי מָהֵם עַד שֶׁמָּצָאתִי אֶת שְׁאֵהָבָה נִפְשִׁי אֶחָתִיו וְלֹא אֶרְפְּנוּ עַד שֶׁהִבִּיאַתִּי אֶל-בֵּית אִמִּי וְאֶל-חֶדֶר הִוְרָתִי:
(kim°at syea°v°arti mahem ‘ad syemmatsâ°ti ‘et sye’ ahavâ naphsyi ‘ahazetiwi velo’ ‘arpenu ‘ad-syehavi°tiw ‘el-bet ‘ommi we°el-kheder horati.)

Song of Songs 3:4 in Net Bible translation is I was just passing them when I found my lover! I held him closer and wouldn't let him go until I took him to my mother's house, to the

bedroom of the one who bore me. This line clearly explains the process in which the woman finds her soul mate whom she loves very much. After getting the idol of the woman's heart took her to Mother's house. Mother's house confirms the existence of a very extraordinary woman in the Bible. For Natar, the use of the word "father" or "father's house" does not appear in the Song of Songs at all. The term that appears is precisely the term "mother's house" (Song of Songs 3:4; 8:2). The woman here talks about her family by mentioning her "mother's house." The true meaning of this expression is difficult to ascertain. However, interpretatively this term can be explained thus, that in the life of Israel the support and consent of the mother were needed for marriage even in the context of a king's marriage or a king's harem. In the Song of Songs, the "mother's house" is the safest place for a loving partner. Because this term is rarely used, it determines its true meaning, because in a patriarchal society it is always called "father's house."

5th Verse

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנִי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם בְּצִבְאוֹת אֵן בְּאַיָּלוֹת הַשְּׂדֵה אִם-תִּעֲרֹוּ וְאִם-תִּעֲוֹרְרוּ אֶת-הָאֵהָבָה עַד שְׁתַּחֲפֹץ: ס
(Hisyba'eti 'etkem benot Yerusalaime bitseba'ot 'o be'ayelot hassadeh 'im-ta'iru: we'im-te'oreru 'et-ha'ahavâ 'ad syetekhepats.)

The Net Bible translates this verse as the poet's climactic cry to the virgins. Prisoner of Judgment: Beloved to Girls: I admonish you, O girls of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the young in the open field: "Do not awaken or awaken love until it is pleasant!" This verse is the end of this poem. In this verse, the poet wants to give a warning to the girls of Jerusalem who are said to be holy virgins to guard themselves and not to enjoy youth in vain. This is a strong critique of the patriarchal system in Israel. But on the other hand, this array is also a deviation from patriarchal culture. Because women's lives are very restrained at this time. Women do not have sex before marriage.

Song of Songs 3:1-5 in LAI entitled Dreams of the Bridegroom has several explicit performance values which are reflected in the metaphors and language style used by the poet. These values include:

- 1) Loyalty which is reflected in his attitude of waiting for his lover for a long time.
- 2) Persistence is reflected in the amount of effort the woman makes to find her lover,
- 3) Brave is illustrated by how he finds his Beloved at night and meets the city patrols who don't even care about him.
- 4) The sincerity of love is reflected in the happiness he feels when he finds his lover and brings him to his family.
- 5) His humility as a child is reflected in his decision to bring his lover to his mother's house. Besides wanting to introduce his lover to his family, on the other hand he wants to devote himself to a good child.

Conclusion

The poem also criticizes the very strong patriarchal culture in Hebrew society. The implementation of patriarchal culture is preserved in the lives of present Christians. But this

poem gives illustrates that women are very close to love, loyalty, and the courage to risk anything for what she stands for. Women's love is different from men's love. Women are very sensitive to problems but he is willing to do anything for the people she loves. Women's love is like God's love that's why women are willing to risk their lives to give birth and God is willing to die to atone for human sins. That's called unconditional love. Through this poem, the writer wants to convey that Allah is not patriarchal because Allah has the same character as women. And Woman has a better perception of love and life. The poem in the Song of Songs 3: 1-5 was written by a lovely and clever poet woman. The poet what I mean is different from the author of the book, which means that poet is just about composed love poetry. The writings in the Bible that are related to patriarchy are always developed from a patriarchal perspective and cannot be refuted with unproven statements. However, by using the point of view and analysis of feminist literary criticism to examine the Book of Literature, we can prove that women have a contribution to the literary knowledge of the Bible. This is something new in the world of Bible literature. Thus, this paper is expected to be a contribution to Christian theology and the dynamics of patriarchal society from the past to the present day.

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