

Literary Works Empowering Social Movements: *A Doll's House & Bumi Manusia* Analysis in Norwegian-Indonesian Feminism

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the role that literature plays in social movements, particularly in the gender equality movement such as women's autonomy in social settings. By comparing two literary works, *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen and *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, the article investigates the impact of literature on the first wave of the feminist movement in Norway in 1879 and the portrayal of women's conditions in Indonesia at the time. The research employed qualitative research methods such as content analysis and discourse analysis, as well as comparative analysis of the two literary works. The research found that *A Doll's House* played a significant role in the Norwegian feminist movement and gave women confidence and the awareness that they were not merely puppets for men, but human beings whose voices needed to be heard. Similarly, *Bumi Manusia* showed resistance and awareness of the oppression faced by Indonesian women, highlighting the role of literature in promoting equality movements. These important literary works demonstrate the power of literature in documenting, retelling, and raising awareness of people's stories, ultimately reaching a larger audience.

Keywords: feminism; literature; gender; comparative

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INTRODUCTION

During the time when *A Doll's House* was first performed on December 21, 1879, Norway was in the midst of the first wave of the feminist movement, which lasted from 1879 to 1890 (Siim & Skjeie, 2008). The movement aimed to empower women by giving them a platform to assert their opinions and participate in social and political activities without the influence of men. At that time, women were oppressed by restrictive and damaging societal stereotypes, and their voices were not given any weight or consideration (Mattila, 2019). They were not allowed to have their own opinions or make decisions, and if any issues arose in their household or social environment, their opinions and votes were not counted.

Women were also severely limited in terms of financial and decision-making power. They were not allowed to engage in transactions or make any moves outside of their homes without a permit signed by their father, husband, or male relatives. The notion of a woman's life was limited to merely moving from one household to another, from her father's to her husband's, and their birth was not considered a cause for celebration. Women were not allowed an education and were considered unable to work in government positions (Balaky & Sulaiman, 2016).

Before the advent of the feminist movement, the types of jobs that women were typically allowed to perform were limited to small-scale industrial jobs such as food and cigarette production, and they were not considered competent enough for more advanced or physically demanding work. As explained by Ana Mendez (2013), the gender roles and job responsibilities in Norway during that time period were vastly different for men and women. Men were expected to secure employment and handle important matters while women were confined to the home. At social events, men and women were kept separate, with men engaging in discussions about economics, sports, and politics, while women were relegated to the kitchen to serve the male members of the household.

Literary works that emerged before the first wave of the feminist movement in Norway reflected the state of society and the values that were widely accepted during that time period. The focus of literature for women was primarily on their journey to find a husband, and these works were largely addressed to women. Some of the famous female writers of the time were Hanna Winsnes, Marie Wexelsen, and Anna Magdalena Thoresen. These writers provided insight into the societal norms and expectations placed on women during that time period, highlighting the limitations they faced and their experiences in navigating these restrictions. Through their works, they also portrayed the struggles and experiences of women in a male-dominated society, giving a voice to the marginalized and often unheard female perspective.

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Camilla Collett was a writer who inspired the first wave of feminist awareness in Norway through her work, "The Daughters of the Prefect," which was published in 1855. Later, in 1871, four male writers known as the "big four" emerged and made significant contributions to the cause of women's rights through their writing. These writers, Henrik Ibsen, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Alexander Kielland, and Jonas Lie, wrote works that were intended to empower and uplift women, highlighting the need for equal rights and opportunities for women in society. Their contributions helped to lay the foundation for the feminist movement and sparked a change in attitudes and beliefs towards women in Norway. Through their works, these writers aimed to break down the barriers and limitations that women faced, and to inspire change and progress towards a more equitable and just society for all.

As seen from the discussions of various authors, the feminist movement in Norway was initiated with the first wave of feminism and was later spread throughout Europe through its literary works. One such work that has had a significant impact and has been widely translated and performed outside of Europe is Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. This play was a powerful representation of the feminist ideals and a reflection of the societal norms and values of the time. Through its portrayal of the experiences and struggles of women in a male-dominated society, it was able to bring attention to the need for equal rights and opportunities for women and inspire change towards a more equitable and just society. The success and popularity of *A Doll's House* demonstrated the growing awareness and support for the feminist movement and its ideals and helped to spread its message to a wider audience, making it an influential work in the history of the feminist movement.

Feminism in Indonesia has a rich and complex history that dates back to the early 20th century. The Indonesian feminist movement emerged during the era of Dutch colonial rule when educated Indonesian women, inspired by global feminist ideas, began advocating for gender equality and women's rights. The colonial period saw the rise of prominent women activists such as Kartini, who fought for women's education and empowerment. According to Soekarno, the first President of Indonesia, women were instrumental in the nation's struggle for independence and should be granted equal rights. This early feminist movement laid the foundation for subsequent waves of feminism in Indonesia (Missbach, 2013; Robinson, 1995).

The second wave of feminism in Indonesia occurred during the 1980s and 1990s. This period was characterized by an increased focus on women's rights, gender equality, and reproductive rights. Women's organizations and NGOs played a significant role in advocating for legal reforms to address discrimination against women and improve their socio-economic conditions. The influential National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) was established in 1998 to monitor and address gender-based violence and discrimination. The second wave of feminism also witnessed the

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emergence of feminist scholars and activists who critiqued patriarchal structures and highlighted the intersectionality of gender with other forms of oppression (Hedman, 2006; Robinson, 2008).

The third wave of feminism in Indonesia has been marked by increased awareness of diverse gender identities and intersectional issues. It has seen a growing number of young feminists using digital platforms and social media to raise awareness, organize campaigns, and challenge societal norms. Online feminist communities and platforms such as Twitter and Instagram have provided spaces for discussions on topics like sexual harassment and women's bodily autonomy. The #MeToo movement also had an impact on Indonesian feminism, encouraging survivors of sexual assault to speak out and pushing for changes in attitudes towards gender-based violence. The third wave of feminism in Indonesia continues to evolve and adapt to the changing socio-political landscape, aiming to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all (Blackburn, 2004).

In 1980, Indonesia saw the publication of *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. This post-colonial literary work provides insight into the lives of Indonesian women during that time period and appears to share similarities with Henrik Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*. As both works address gender equality in their respective countries, it is of interest to the writer to examine and compare the level of gender equality awareness depicted in these two literary pieces. By analyzing the two important canon works, the writer seeks to determine if Norway and Indonesia had similar experiences regarding gender equality during the same time period.

The research on the role of literature in social movements is a well-established area of study. Scholars have explored the impact of literature in promoting social change in various contexts, including feminist movements. However, the comparative analysis of two literary works from different cultural contexts, *A Doll's House* and *Bumi Manusia*, in the context of the first wave of feminism in Norway and the portrayal of women's conditions in Indonesia, is a unique contribution to the field.

By comparing these literary works, the research aims to shed light on the similarities and differences between Norwegian feminism and Indonesian feminism during the respective time periods. Such a comparative approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the specific socio-cultural and historical contexts that shaped the feminist movements in these two countries. It enables the exploration of how literature served as a platform for raising awareness about women's rights and challenging patriarchal norms within distinct cultural and societal frameworks. Additionally, the comparison provides an opportunity to examine the specific challenges faced by women in each context and the strategies employed to advocate for gender equality. Ultimately, this comparative research enriches our understanding of the global diversity and complexities within feminist movements and highlights the importance of considering local contexts in analyzing the impact of literature on social change.

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This research adds to the state of the art by providing insights into the role of literature in promoting gender equality movements in different cultural contexts. The study uses a qualitative research method that combines content analysis and discourse analysis to analyze the literary works, which is a novel approach in the field of literature studies.

The research also highlights some research gaps in the area of literature and social movements. While scholars have explored the impact of literature in promoting social change, there is still a lack of studies that compare the impact of literary works in different cultural contexts. Moreover, there is still a need for more studies that explore the role of literature in promoting social movements, particularly in the context of the feminist movement in developing countries.

METHOD

This qualitative research included the process of close reading of the texts to identify themes and motifs related to social movements and feminist ideologies. The researcher will also examine the historical context in which the works were written and analyze the ways in which they contributed to or were influenced by social and political movements.

Qualitative research method is conducted which is content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis involves systematically categorizing and analyzing the content of written or spoken material to identify patterns and themes. In this case, the researcher would use content analysis to identify themes related to social movements and feminism in the literary works. Discourse analysis involves examining the use of language in a particular text or set of texts to identify underlying power dynamics and cultural assumptions. In this case, the researcher would use discourse analysis to identify how the literary works contributed to or challenged dominant cultural narratives about social movements and feminism in *A Doll's House* and *Bumi Manusia* which involves a rigorous examination of the literary works themselves and the historical and cultural context in which they were written to identify themes related to social movements and feminism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Before delving deeper on their works, it is important to understand both the background of the authors and the content of their work so the analysis would not be one sided. Henrik Johan Ibsen was a renowned Norwegian writer who lived in the 19th century. Throughout his career, he wrote numerous works that gained him prominence in the literary world. Ibsen was not only productive in Norway but also during his time in Italy where he lived due to exile. He also wrote in Germany before finally returning to Norway as a well-known writer. One of his most celebrated works is the play script *A Doll's House*, which was written in Germany in 1868 (von Klenze, 1941).

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Henrik Ibsen was a pioneering writer of his time who challenged societal norms and wrote about topics that were not yet widely understood or accepted. Despite his unconventional approach, he has had a profound impact on the literary world and served as an inspiration for some of the greatest writers of all time, including George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Miller, James Joyce, Eugene O'Neill, and Miroslav Krleža. Ibsen's impact on literature is further evidenced by the fact that he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature three times, in the years 1902, 1903, and 1904. His writing was ahead of its time, and he remains one of the most important figures in the history of literature.

Henrik Ibsen is widely regarded by feminist critics as a visionary writer who was ahead of his time. He is seen as a social realist and a revolutionary thinker who sought to give voice to the marginalized and oppressed women of 19th-century Norway. Through his writing, he shed light on the struggles and challenges faced by women during this period and sought to raise awareness of the issues they faced. One of his most famous characters, Nora, was created to represent the thoughts, confusion, and frustration of women during this time, and has become an iconic figure in European and global literature. Ibsen's commitment to using his writing as a means of advocating for women's rights continues to inspire and inform feminist critics to this day.

Women are complete and whole human beings who deserve respect and value in their own right, regardless of their relationship to men. However, the differences in life experiences and gender can sometimes lead men to only recognize the humanity of women through the women in their own lives. This is reflected in the work of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, who through his writing seeks to emphasize the individual worth and dignity of women. By doing so, he challenges societal norms and calls for a deeper appreciation of the unique experiences and perspectives of women. Through his writing, Toer endeavors to promote gender equality and to give voice to the experiences of women in his society.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer's life and works have been widely documented and many scholars have explored the connection between his feminist writing and his personal relationships with the women in his life, such as his mother and grandmother (Yanuar Bagas Arwansyah & Nanda Saputra, 2021). His writing often reflects the experiences of women in colonial and post-colonial societies, and he portrays female characters who are independent, strong, and progressive but who still face challenges in a patriarchal environment that views them as subservient (Aryani & Maullinda, 2019; Auliana, 2020; Azwar et al., 2020; Permana & Maulana, 2020). Through his writing, Toer seeks to challenge these societal norms and to raise awareness of the challenges faced by women in patriarchal societies. By creating powerful female characters and exploring their experiences, he strives to promote gender equality and to give voice to the struggles of women in his world.

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One of the most notable female characters in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's writing is Nyai Ontosoroh, a woman who is marginalized and considered a non-respectable figure in society due to her status as a non-legitimate wife. Despite this, she rises above the prejudices against her and builds a successful business empire. Her story has become a focus of discussion in gender studies and is considered relevant to the early movements for gender justice in Indonesia (Arwansyah & Saputra, 2021). Toer's depiction of Nyai Ontosoroh serves as a powerful critique of the patriarchal structures that limit women's opportunities and as a celebration of the resilience and determination of women in the face of adversity. By shining a light on the experiences of women like Nyai Ontosoroh, Toer hopes to inspire and empower women and to challenge societal norms that hold them back.

Comparing the works of two authors and the literary pieces they have created can lead to a valuable discussion. Such a comparison can shed light on the similarities and differences between the authors' styles, themes, and perspectives. It can also provide a deeper understanding of the cultural, historical, and societal context in which the works were created, and help to situate the authors within the broader literary tradition. Ultimately, a comparison of the two authors and their works can foster a deeper appreciation of the intricacies and complexities of the literary landscape and provide a more nuanced understanding of the writers' contributions to literature and their impact on the world.

First Wave Feminism and Gender Stereotypes

The first wave of feminism in Europe, which took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was primarily focused on women's rights in the public sphere. Women sought to gain political identity and the right to vote, marking a significant turning point in the struggle for gender equality. However, according to Maguire (2016), Simone de Beauvoir's seminal work "The Second Sex" marked the beginning of the second wave of feminism, which broadened the scope of feminist concerns to include a wide range of issues such as sexuality, family, the workplace, reproductive rights, and more. In her book, Beauvoir outlines the ways in which women are perceived as inferior and secondary to men in a patriarchal society. She argues that women are often treated as the "other" and that patriarchal norms and cultural practices contribute to this marginalization. By highlighting these systemic inequalities, Beauvoir helped to lay the foundation for the second wave of feminism, which sought to challenge and change these structures and attitudes.

Simone de Beauvoir's book "The Second Sex" was a crucial catalyst for the second wave of feminism. At the time of its publication, the voices of women in America, Europe, and much of the world were still largely marginalized, with many of their experiences and perspectives going unheard.

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Women were often seen as subordinate to men and were excluded from many areas of public life, leading to a significant lack of representation and influence. However, Beauvoir's voice and writings helped to give rise to a new feminist movement that sought to challenge these systemic inequalities and empower women to speak out and make their voices heard. Her book became a central point of inspiration for this movement, helping to inspire a new generation of feminists to demand greater rights, equality, and respect for women. By elevating women's voices and highlighting the experiences of women who had been marginalized for so long, Beauvoir made a powerful impact on the world and helped to set the stage for the second wave of feminism.

In her book "Simone de Beauvoir, Philosophy & Feminism," Nancy Bauer cites Simone de Beauvoir's perspective on the issue of gender and identity. According to Bauer's quote from Beauvoir, men do not have to establish themselves as individuals of a certain gender; it poses no problem for them. This observation by Beauvoir highlights the ways in which patriarchal systems often privilege men and automatically assume their identity as a default. Beauvoir's words emphasize the need to critically examine these societal norms and to challenge the assumption that being a man is unproblematic. This insight is a powerful reminder of the need to actively work towards a more equitable and inclusive society, where all individuals are free to define themselves and their own identities, regardless of their gender.

The quote by Simone de Beauvoir points out the stark contrast between the experiences of men and women in patriarchal societies. While men are not burdened by having to prove their worth or justify their existence, women are often confined to narrow gender roles and expectations. The idea that men's presence poses no problem highlights the inherent biases that exist within society and the ways in which women are routinely marginalized and made to feel inferior. This disparity is especially evident when it comes to issues related to sex, which have a significant impact on social order and contribute to the continued inequality between men and women. Beauvoir's words serve as a biting critique of the patriarchal system and a call to action to work towards a more equal and just society where both men and women are valued and respected.

Nora, the protagonist in Ibsen's play, represents the struggles faced by women in the 19th century. Despite her intelligence and understanding of business matters, she is oppressed by both her husband and the societal expectations placed upon her. She rebels against this pressure in small ways, unable to fully express her dissatisfaction with her limited role as a mere housewife. This character highlights the limitations and frustrations faced by women in a patriarchal society and serves as a testament to the limitations faced by women at the time.

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Gender stereotypes, also known as sexism, are harmful and limiting beliefs about individuals based on their gender. These negative assumptions stem from the patriarchal structure of society which prioritizes and elevates the role of men over women. One example of such a stereotype is the idea that women are seen as being emotional and unreliable due to hormonal influences. This type of belief is fueled by the notion that gender is solely determined by biology, rather than being shaped by societal norms and expectations.

The establishment and perpetuation of gender stereotypes begin from a young age and are often influenced by the beliefs and attitudes of the parents. These stereotypes, which define expected behaviors for men and women, shape the perception of young children and contribute to the creation of gender-based biases. These biases, rooted in patriarchal values, impose limitations and restrictions on women, leading to a gender-unequal society.

The first wave of feminism primarily focused on addressing legal and economic issues faced by women (Hulme, 2021). However, this movement was also rooted in the negative stereotypes and distrust of women's abilities that had been ingrained in society. This led to the belief that women were not capable of handling professional careers and managing money, which ultimately resulted in limiting opportunities for women and hindering their progress. The impact of these negative stereotypes can still be seen today, highlighting the ongoing importance of challenging and breaking down gender-based biases and limitations.

Nora Helmer the Doll

Prior to the emergence of *A Doll's House* as a cultural phenomenon, the institution of marriage in Norway imposed strict and clearly defined roles and responsibilities on women as wives. Women were expected to remain at home, serve their husbands, and take care of their children. Consequently, when the play was first performed, it came as a surprise to many people, as Ibsen challenged these traditional expectations and introduced new possibilities for women. The protagonist, Nora, was dubbed the "new woman" for her portrayal of a female character who had a mind of her own and sought to establish her own identity, beyond the confines of traditional gender roles that simply transferred a woman from the protection of her father to that of her husband.

At the start of the performance, Nora is depicted as a joyful and content individual. Her behavior and demeanor towards her husband, Torvald, are marked by obedience and a cheerful disposition. Torvald, in turn, seems to easily find happiness and takes pleasure in giving Nora playful nicknames, such as "silly." The scene in which Torvald gives her these endearments effectively conveys the dynamic between the two characters, with Nora appearing submissive and Torvald appearing to be the dominant

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figure in the relationship. The tone of their interactions in the beginning of the play sets the stage for the dramatic developments that occur later on.

(A bell rings in the hall; shortly afterwards the door is heard to open. Enter Nora, humming a tune and in high spirits. She is in outdoor dress and carries a number of parcels; these she lays on the table to the right. She leaves the outer door open after her, and through it is seen a porter who is carrying a Christmas Tree and a basket, which he gives to the maid who has opened the door.)

Nora: Hide the Christmas Tree carefully, Helen. Be sure the children do not see it until this evening, when it is dressed. (To the porter, taking out her purse.) How much?

Porter: Sixpence.

Nora: There is a shilling. No, keep the change. (The porter thanks her, and goes out. Nora shuts the door. She is laughing to herself, as she takes off her hat and coat. She takes a packet of macaroons from her pocket and eats one or two; then goes cautiously to her husband's door and listens.) Yes, he is in. (Still humming, she goes to the table on the right.) (Hal. 3-4, Ibsen, 2001).

In the opening scene of *A Doll's House*, Nora is initially portrayed as a typical, cheerful Norwegian wife who is seen busy shopping for her family's necessities. She is depicted as being generous when it comes to finances and is portrayed as being active and energetic. However, as the play progresses, it becomes apparent that Nora is not simply an ordinary wife, content to play the role of eye candy for her husband. She displays an astute understanding of financial matters, as evidenced by her desperate measures to pay for her husband's medical expenses. This highlights Nora's intelligence and resourcefulness, which exceeded the expectations of the typical wife at the time. Women were not allowed to conduct transactions at the bank, let alone borrow money without the permission of their husbands or fathers. However, in a moment of desperation, Nora forged her deceased father's signature and secured a loan, which she later paid off by secretly taking on odd jobs and using the shopping money given to her by her husband. These actions demonstrate Nora's cunning and her determination to provide for her family, even if it means disregarding societal norms.

Krogstad, an employee of the bank who was involved in the illicit transaction, eventually threatened Nora to pressure her husband, who was the manager of the bank, to reinstate Krogstad's position. If Nora's husband failed to do so, Krogstad threatened to expose the secret to Helmer.

Nora. (walking up and down the stage). Sometimes one has a tiny little bit of influence, I should hope. Because one is a woman, it does not necessarily follow that—. When anyone is in a subordinate position, Mr. Krogstad, they should really be careful to avoid offending anyone who—who—

Krogstad. Who has influence?

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Nora. Exactly.

Krogstad. (changing his tone). Mrs. Helmer, you will be so good as to use your influence on my behalf.

Nora. What? What do you mean?

Krogstad. You will be so kind as to see that I am allowed to keep my subordinate position in the Bank.

Nora. What do you mean by that? Who proposes to take your post away from you?

Krogstad. Oh, there is no necessity to keep up the pretence of ignorance. I can quite understand that your friend is not very anxious to expose herself to the chance of rubbing shoulders with me; and I quite understand, too, whom I have to thank for being turned off.

...

Krogstad. When your husband was ill, you came to me to borrow two hundred and fifty pounds. (hal. 25-26, Ibsen, 2001).

Nora demonstrates her rebellious nature by engaging in behavior that is considered unconventional for women of her time. When her husband is not present, she freely curses to vent her frustrations, which elicits surprise and shock from those around her. This behavior serves as a testament to her growing discontent with the restrictions imposed upon her by societal norms and her husband's domineering ways. Nora further resists Helmer's attempts to control her by secretly consuming a macaroon, despite her husband forbidding her from eating it due to concerns about damaging her teeth. This act of defiance highlights Nora's determination to assert her independence and assert control over her own life, despite the strict expectations placed upon her as a wife and mother.

Rank: Well, what is that?

Nora: It's something I should dearly love to say, if Torvald could hear me.

Rank: Well, why can't you say it?

Nora: No, I daren't; it's so shocking.

Mrs. Linde: Shocking?

Rank: Well, I should not advise you to say it. Still, with us you might. What is it you would so much like to say if Torvald could hear you?

Nora: I should just love to say—Well, I'm damned!

Rank: Are you mad?

Mrs. Linde.: Nora, dear—!

Rank: Say it, here he is!

Nora: (hiding the packet). Hush! Hush! Hush! (Helmer comes out of his room, with his coat over his arm and his hat in his hand.) (Hal. 20, Ibsen, 2001).

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The conflict reaches its peak when Helmer discovers the secret that Nora has been hiding from him. Instead of addressing the issue head-on, Helmer dismisses it and asks Nora to simply forget about it and change, much to her disappointment. This event serves as a turning point for Nora, as it forces her to confront the reality of her unhappiness and her unfulfilled desires. She realizes that she doesn't want to merely play the role of a submissive wife and be confined to the domestic sphere, despite what society and her husband may consider as normal. Instead, Nora yearns to find her true identity and to pursue her own aspirations. In a bold move, she defies societal norms and leaves her home, husband, and children behind. She renounces the constraints that have been holding her back and chooses to break free from the social norms that have limited her freedom and suppressed her individuality.

Nyai Ontosoroh the Businesswoman

If Ibsen brings attention to the potential of women through Nora's defiance, Pram raises awareness about the everyday injustices faced by women through the character of Nyai Ontosoroh, the mistress of Mr. Mellema. Despite the negative connotations attached to the title of "nyai," Nyai Ontosoroh is depicted as a woman of great character and dignity. She is intelligent, capable of running a business in the absence of Mr. Mellema, and is a single mother who raises her children with great care and dedication. The societal stereotypes of the time suggest that women are not intelligent and lack the educational opportunities that men have. However, Nyai Ontosoroh shatters these notions as she is fluent in Dutch, Madura, and Javanese and is well-read and possesses the poise and grace of a respectable woman.

... I'm still fascinated to see a Native woman not only speak Dutch, very well, but mostly because she doesn't have a complex towards male guests. Where else can a woman like her be found? What school was it? And why a nyai, a concubine? Who else has educated her to be so free like European women? (p. 34, Toer, 2016).

In the quoted passage, Minke is astounded by Nyai's confident and assertive personality. He has preconceived notions about Indonesian women being submissive and intimidated by men and is taken aback by Nyai's intelligence and bravery. He is also puzzled as to why someone as capable as Nyai would only be a mistress, rather than a legally recognized wife. This is due to the gender stereotype that women are not supposed to be educated or have careers. Despite this, Nyai is a successful businesswoman and a leader in the household of Mr. Mellema, who is often away at Ah Tjong's brothel. Minke's surprise at Nyai's character highlights the societal expectations and biases of the time.

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The issue of marriage in Nyai Ontosoroh's era was a highly oppressive one for women. They were not given a choice in the matter and were not allowed to choose their own partners. Even when they reached the appropriate age for marriage, they were expected to hide themselves away. Nyai, whose real name was Sanikem, was traded off to a stranger for money by her father, with no opportunity for her to object. Her mother was unable to intervene, despite her tears and opposition, and this serves as a poignant example of the lack of power and agency that women faced in Nusantara in the 1973s. The situation highlights the patriarchal nature of the society at the time, where women were subjected to the whims of men and were stripped of their ability to make decisions about their own lives.

“When I was thirteen I was secluded, and only knew the kitchen, the back room, and my own room. Other friends have already married. When neighbors or relatives come, I feel like I'm outside the house like when I was a child. Even sitting in the pavilion I was not allowed. Not even stepping on the floor (p. 118, Toer, 2016).

This quote highlights the limited options available to women in terms of their personal and professional lives. They were confined to the domestic sphere and did not have any control over who they married. Nyai harbors resentment towards her parents for treating her as a commodity, trading her for money and status. She refuses to see them or forgive them, even when they attempt to visit her. She feels that her mother could have done something to stop this from happening but was too afraid of her husband to speak up. This experience drives Nyai to become highly educated and determined to prove to her parents that she can make the most of her situation. Through her hard work and dedication, Nyai seeks to demonstrate that she is not a passive victim of her circumstances, but a capable and resilient woman who can take control of her own life.

Comparative Analysis of Both Works

In Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Bumi Manusia*, the characters of Nora Helmer and Nyai Ontosoroh serve as powerful symbols of female empowerment and resistance against societal expectations. Through a comparative analysis of these literary works, we gain insights into the distinct challenges faced by women in Norwegian and Indonesian societies during the respective time periods. Nora's defiance of traditional gender roles in Norway challenges the prevailing norms of her time, while Nyai's determination to establish her identity as a businesswoman in Indonesia breaks through societal stereotypes. This comparative study illuminates the unique paths taken by these women in their quest for liberation and sheds light on the complex dynamics of feminism in different cultural contexts.

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The portrayal of Nora Helmer in *A Doll's House* showcases the constrained existence of women in Norwegian society, particularly within the institution of marriage. Nora's initial portrayal as a cheerful and submissive wife highlights the restrictive gender roles imposed on women, perpetuated by the dominant male figure of her husband, Torvald. However, as the play unfolds, Nora's resourcefulness and defiance emerge, as she challenges societal expectations and takes bold actions to secure her independence. This departure from the traditional portrayal of women as passive reinforces the significance of Nora's character as a catalyst for feminist discourse in Norway.

On the other hand, Nyai Ontosoroh's character in *Bumi Manusia* challenges the norms of Indonesian society during the colonial era. As a mistress and single mother, Nyai defies the limited expectations imposed on women by demonstrating her intellect, business acumen, and resilience. Her journey serves as a powerful critique of the oppressive nature of arranged marriages and the lack of agency afforded to women at the time. Through Nyai's determination to pursue her own path, the novel brings attention to the struggle faced by Indonesian women in their quest for personal freedom and self-realization.

By comparing these two literary works, we gain a broader understanding of the diverse experiences of women in different cultural contexts. The comparative analysis of Nora Helmer and Nyai Ontosoroh allows for a nuanced examination of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women in Norway and Indonesia during their respective time periods. The exploration of the feminist themes and character development in these works enhances our understanding of the complexities within the feminist movements of these countries and the broader global struggle for gender equality.

CONCLUSION

A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen was a major force in the first wave of the feminist movement, and its impact on the fight for gender equality cannot be overstated. Through its realistic depiction of women's lives, the play gave women the confidence and self-awareness to realize that they were not simply playthings for men, but human beings with their own thoughts, feelings, and desires. Similarly, *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, though not the only Indonesian literary work to contribute to the fight for gender equality in the country, provides an important representation of the lives of women during a specific period in Indonesian history and illustrates the existence of resistance and awareness of the oppression experienced by women. These two canonical works demonstrate the crucial role that literature can play in social movements, particularly in the movement for equality. Through documenting, retelling, and raising awareness of people's stories, literary

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works can reach a wider audience and help to shape public discourse and attitudes. The implications of the research reveal that both *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen and *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer have made significant contributions to the feminist movement and the fight for gender equality. These literary works have not only shed light on the experiences and struggles of women but also empowered them to challenge societal norms and assert their rights as individuals. By examining the impact of these works, it becomes evident that literature has the power to influence public opinion and shape social movements by amplifying marginalized voices and challenging established norms and beliefs.

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