

THE RADICAL FEMINISM IN NO EXIT'S PLAY BY JEAN PAUL SARTRE

Martina Girsang¹

Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
martinagirsang253@gmail.com¹

Mega Patrisia Manalu²

Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
megapatrisiamanalu@gmail.com²

Prity Cecilia³

Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
ceciliands12@gmail.com³

Rainy Agria Agnes⁴

Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
rainyagriaagnes0710@gmail.com⁴

Rifkha Sinambela⁵

Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
rifkhasinambela33@gmail.com⁵

Abstract

This study analyses the non-normative feminism performed by the characters in a play entitled No Exit by Jean Paul Sartre. The concept of feminism is linked to the liberation of women from the control and dominance of men. On the other hand, non-stereotypical principles are the development of individuals. In this non-normative discussion, the author relates it to the realm of feminism and lesbianism which is part of radical feminist theory. The objective of the study is to identify the tendency of non-normative of the characters named Inès, and Estelle in the play. This study is a literary criticism using qualitative descriptive method. The results of the study showed that the two main female characters show non-normative feminism attitudes, including having a sexual orientation that slightly deviate from French society at that time, not wanting to be in a relationship with men, and also not wanting to give birth and become a mother. As the title No Exit reminds us, Inès and Estelle exhibit their true identities only in a world closed to the rest of society; even in this space they are always reprimanded. Thus, Sartre criticizes the lack of options for non-stereotypical women in French society, as well as the tendency to view these women as inherently 'immoral'.

Keywords: No Exit; Play; Feminism; Non-Normative Feminism

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is the practice of expressing one's thoughts, feelings, and emotions in writing. The work of spoken and written composition of the author's intentions that are transmitted

and are referred to as having aesthetics is what is known as literature. In most cases, literary characters communicate them through several genres that are included in the field of literature, the

most prominent of which being fiction, non-fiction, and play. These categories encompass a wide variety of the subgenres that fall under them as well. As a means of conveying the playwright's feelings about a specific individual or social consequence, plays are produced on stage for an audience in order to convey their major message (referred to as the topic in literary terms) about the way of life they depict.

It's intriguing that discussions of Sartre's views on women rarely include his involvement in the theater. It's peculiar, especially when one considers the number of plays that Sartre published. Indeed, the researchers argue that theater is the most important literary form to study in responding to this feminist debate, given Sartre's metacognitive thoughts on his plays in *Sartre on Theater, or A Theater of Situations*. In his 1958 lecture, titled "Theatre and Cinema," Sartre explains the social function of theatre, saying "Theatre is a social art which produces collective facts. Its character derives, therefore, from the section of society controlling it" (Sartre 59). In other words, Sartre thinks that theater is fundamentally influenced by society, and that society is also influenced by theater. Given this reciprocal relationship which accentuates the social aspect, theater is the perfect medium to present a commentary on the treatment of women in society. In another oral speech from 1960, "Epic Theater and Drama Theater" Sartre goes on to emphasize the social capacities of theatre. More precisely, Sartre asserts, "to act (which is indeed the specific object of theater) is to change the world" (Sartre 94). Clearly, Sartre believes that theater can create global change, further emphasizing how it is the ideal literary form for advancing the outside world. It is therefore essential to

study Sartre's theater to determine his beliefs about the status of women in France.

This study will focus on Sartre's theater for this exact reason. The researchers will analyze how Sartre represents feminism in *No Exit* (1944) by non-stereotypical women in the context of typical twentieth-century gender norms. The researchers chose to focus on this play in particular because it offer relatively simple plots in comparison to Sartre's more complicated plays. Thanks to this, Sartre's characterizations take center stage in this play, allowing me to focus on the identities of the female characters. By illuminating these female characterizations, the researchers hope to illuminate the underlying feminism of *No Exit*. The researchers will end the analysis of each play by discussing the fact that these women are forced into evil fates. The researchers argue that, in condemning his female characters, Sartre criticizes the idea that non-normative women are not accepted in French society. Since it is difficult to determine whether Sartre as an individual is a feminist, the following chapters will show how Sartre the playwright is a feminist.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Delmar (1986: 5) as cited in Dickinson (2003: 114), women are subjected to discrimination due to the fact that they are of a different gender, that they have particular needs that are ignored and unfulfilled, and that the fulfillment of these needs would call for a significant cultural shift. The concept of feminism being linked to the liberation of women from the control and dominance of men. To put it another way, feminism is also known as emancipation, and it may be defined as a consciousness of oppression and

extortion to women in society, at work, and in the home, as well as an understanding of women's or men's ability to change the condition. In the ideology known as feminism, women fight against any unfair treatment meted out by society in an effort to achieve equality or freedom.

Furthermore, as mentioned by Paludi (2010:4), feminism is the conviction that social, economic, political, and judicial inequalities are based on particular principles. Traditional culture prefers to treat men better than women, hence the environment prioritizes men over women's rights. Consequently, it is impossible for them to segregate themselves from prohibited behaviors. There are a lot of barriers to using this principle in our society. The reputation of some societies does not need to be fixed because they still hold on to many of their traditional beliefs. The history of feminism is lengthy and complicated. Many concerns have been a part of the feminism movement's fight for women's rights over the years. The complexity of the problem of feminism can be understood by the emergence of various forms of feminism movement. So, feminism is not an understanding that emerged from a single theoretical thought and movement, which applies to all women times. Because feminism as a movement and as an analytical tool is always historical and contextual. That is, the emergence of feminism is a response to the actual and contextual problems of women, especially those concerning the problem of injustice against women.

On the other hand, non-normative principles are the development of individuals who are unable to follow the principles of these norms caused by social status factors. In this non-normative discussion, the author relates

it to the realm of feminism and lesbianism which is part of radical feminism. To illustrate the social construction of masculinity and femininity, Beauvoir described characteristics typically associated with men and women. Women are taught that "to be feminine" means "to appear soft, worthless, submissive," according to the traditional gender binary. Her femininity and attractiveness will be diminished if she shows any sign of assertiveness (Beauvoir, 1953). Women are stereotyped as weak and submissive, and if they resist these roles, they are seen as unattractive. That is the rule, and it applies to man as well. Conversely, positive stereotypes about men are promoted by society, which is the opposite of what happens to women. To paraphrase a social constructionist maxim: "He is the Subject, he is the 'Absolute' — she is the 'Other'" (Beauvoir 1953, p.15). It is the 'Other' category that defines women as being "against culture, society, and rationality and so on are constructed," while the 'Subject' category makes man into a universal figure (Abbott, Wallace & Tyler, 2006). There has been a recent trend among female authors to concentrate on the obstacles that women face in contemporary society and politics. Novels featuring female protagonists who refuse to follow the traditional "woman stereotype" of being helpless and passive have become popular as a result of this trend. As they make headway toward their objectives, many women's movements take the form of canonical literary works. This is because these movements seek equality for women in terms of their rights, status, and roles in society (Junaidi, 2018). Women writers of today have not only reached their current intellectual level as a result of their

education but also as a result of the perspective they have taken on life.

In feminism or a feminist perspective it is said that women are the second sex, they are the second sex (or not primary) of men in a patriarchal society. In this "second sex" there are still too many unanswered debates. Lesbians are believed to be an ethic of resistance and self-creation (Wall, 2013). The ethic of resistance is a concept of a journey of freedom that comes from the experience of experiencing oppression. Lesbian ethics can exist thanks to the women's liberation movement, questioning the construction of women that has been defined by patriarchal society. What they want to fight for are the values of liberation where there is no duplication of domination by the patriarchal society. These minority groups, including lesbians, in the end try to voice their rights, in order to get recognition for their existence. Feminism studies are a way out for those who want to voice their aspirations.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The play "No Exit" by Jean Paul Sartre was studied using a qualitative descriptive method to determine the many varieties of non-normative feminism in the play and how they reflected on feminism. Intensive data collection is required for descriptive qualitative research. This entails amassing voluminous information on a great number of variables over the course of a prolonged length of time within a naturalistic environment (Gay, 1996). In this research, theories are utilized to find the non stereotypical woman. The data were described in terms of feminism analysis. It was examined using a qualitative design, and the results were described in a descriptive form. Literary criticism

serves as the methodological framework for this investigation. According to Peck and Coyle (1993), the process of reviewing, interpreting, and assessing literary works is what is meant by the term "literary criticism." The play No Exit is analyzed by the researcher utilizing the gender studies methodology. Particular attention is paid to feminist theory as well as non-normative feminism.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Although there is much commentary on the treatment of women in Sartre's works, there is not much written about women in Sartre's great existentialist play: No Exit (1944). Sartre published this piece at the height of the existentialist movement in France and just after the publication of his philosophical work, Being and Nothingness. The premise of No Exit is quite simple. Three strangers, already dead, are locked in a room together, and they don't know why. Garcin is the first to arrive in the closed room, followed by Inès, and finally by Estelle. During the play, these three characters argue, eventually realizing that they are in hell. As the setting does not change throughout the play, the work is grounded in the characterization of its characters. For this reason, No Exit is the ideal piece to analyze Sartre's representation of women. By examining the identity of the two women in No Exit, Inès and Estelle, in comparison with the expected roles of women in 1940s France, in the areas of motherhood and sexuality, we will see that Sartre presents atypical women and therefore progressive for its time.

Men were still seen as the better gender in the 1940s, despite the fact that women were gradually getting greater rights. They were better off economically, politically, romantically,

and educationally than everyone else. Throughout history, women have been subjected to persistent forms of oppression and inferiority complex. There are several various power relations in Jean Paul-No Sartre's *Exit* that take place throughout this time. On Earth, Garcin, a male protagonist, is subjected to this patriarchal dominance. Estelle and Inez, on the other hand, are shifting the balance of power in hell, making it difficult for Garcin to maintain the equilibrium he was used to on Earth. This alters his demeanor. Rather than be arrogant and degrade women, he changes roles and becomes a "peacekeeper" in hell. At some point he'll come to terms with his true self-doubts. Therefore, despite the fact that Garcin appears to have made up for his emotionally abusive actions on earth while he is in hell, he ultimately reveals his true, insecure nature.

Garcin

Although the analysis of Sartre's plays will focus primarily on his portrayal of women, one must first consider the role of Garcin, the only male lead character in *No Exit*. Does Sartre portray him as a man who conforms to the masculinity expected of him, or does he refuse traditional gender norms as in Inès and Estelle? In fact, I argue that Sartre characterizes Garcin as a stereotypical man, thus making his portrayal of Inès and Estelle as non-stereotypical women more important. We can see how Garcin asserts his masculinity from the start of the play through his rejection of "unmasculine" emotions. In the third scene of the play, for example, Garcin repeatedly mentions the fact that he is not afraid of being in hell:

"In the glass? How beastly of them! They've removed everything in the least resembling a glass. Anyhow, I can assure you I'm not frightened.

Not that I take my position lightly; I realize its gravity only too well. But I'm not afraid." (Sartre 25).

Garcin's repetition of the fact that he is not afraid accentuates his denial of emotions. Even if Garcin is really scared, he doesn't want to admit it and be considered "weak" for showing his "feminine" emotions. Additionally, Sartre goes on to portray Garcin as a character who rejects his emotions and weakness throughout the play, which is apparent later in his constant denial of being a coward. Clearly, Garcin is trying to assert his masculinity and deny any hint of femininity, which highlights the stark contrast between Sartre's portrayal of men and women, at least in this play. For him, men should not be weak and should be stronger than women. This shows Garcin's attitude of wanting to be seen as dominant among women. While Garcin conforms to his gender role, Inès and Estelle reject them completely. It is possible that Sartre chooses not to break down all gender roles, but specifically those of women with the aim of emphasizing non-typical femininity, thus emphasizing feminism in his work.

Inès

Now, we will begin by analyzing the characterization of Inès, which does not conform to the traditional gender norms of mid-twentieth century France. The non-stereotypical aspect of the character of Inès that I will examine is her lesbianism. Given the fact that Sartre wrote *No Exit* during a time when heterosexuality was considered the norm in France, it is shocking at first to portray a homosexual character. In fact, according to Claire Duchén in *Women's Rights and Women's Lives in France 1944-1968*, "Certainly no homosexual relations" would have been

accepted as a plausibility for women in France during this time, especially in the mid-1940s (Duchen 195). French society in the middle of the twentieth century would have rather disapproved of homosexuality among women, considering it an anomaly (Duchen 196).

Nevertheless, Sartre contradicts the rule; it presents Inès as a woman who brazenly flaunts her homosexuality through her direct words and advances towards Estelle. In scene five, Inès clearly reveals to viewers the fact that she is homosexual, saying "*I don't like men very much*" (Sartre 34). Her outspoken way of speaking suggests that she is not ashamed of her sexuality, but rather accepts it as an integral part of her feminine identity. Furthermore, once Estelle enters the room, we see that Inès immediately becomes preoccupied with pleasing her. Indeed, when Estelle appears in scene four and refuses to sit on the ugly sofa, the first words that come out of Inès' mouth are; "*do you want mine?*" (Sartre 28). In this first interaction, we can see that Inès is openly interested in Estelle. Perhaps more important in this moment is that she takes on the typical role of a chivalrous man; she does not hesitate to offer her sofa as a gift.

As the plot progresses, Inès continues to try to woo Estelle through selfless actions and the typical flattery of a traditional romance. By depicting Inès in a way typically used to characterize courteous men, Sartre normalizes her homosexuality and presents it as an authorized sexuality, at least in the world of her play. We see Inès' gallantry in scene five when Inès pays Estelle a compliment, saying, "*You are very beautiful. I would like to have flowers to welcome you*" (Sartre 30). In this example, Inès not only shows her wish to give Estelle a present, as we

have already seen with the sofa, but she also values Estelle's beauty. Throughout the play, Inès continues to notice Estelle's prettiness, saying several times, "*you are beautiful*" and "*I like you.*" She even goes so far as to serve as a mirror to compliment her beauty. (Sartre 46).

Inès therefore compliments Estelle's appearance to try to win her favor, and this way of expressing her homosexuality reflects the tactics typically used by the men of the court. In fact, in her historical study of women in *The Second Sex* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir claims that courtly love is defined by women's ability to "make flattery bloom around them", often through poetry romance of men. (Beauvoir 163). While Inès isn't writing a love poem, her assertions of Estelle's beauty achieve that same goal of courting a woman. However, while Sartre's comparison of Inès to a gallant man can be said to devalue the legitimacy of his portrayal of female homosexuality, he has to. Sartre presents Inès' lesbianism through traditional romance so that her audience can understand her in such a traditionalist society.

Sartre attempts to illustrate that heterosexuals desire equality and recognition. Although they questioned social roles and gender inequity, feminists never raised the issue of a "natural" inclination or heterosexuality as the norm when they questioned these issues. As a consequence, lesbians, who felt alienated from both of these movements, were compelled to develop a distinctively feminist lesbian politics—one that denaturalized heterosexuality and questioned the establishment of heterosexuality as the standard paradigm of sexuality. During that time, being lesbian was considered as more of a political choice than a

preference related to one's sexual orientation. Lesbianism constituted the greatest significant threat to the preexisting social order because it rejected the traditional hierarchical relationship of power that has traditionally existed between men and women. Therefore, it is crucial that a critique of conventional heterosexuality in feminism is typically performed from the perspective of lesbian and gay thought. According to what Cherr Moraga wrote, "In this society, being gay is a poverty, just like being brown, just like being a woman, and just like being poor in general. The problem arises in trying to rank the different forms of tyranny. Koyama (2006) said that the risk lies in denying the particular nature of the oppression that is being experienced. Both feminism and lesbianism were accused of privileging women's oppression as the main marker of identity, so viewing subordination exclusively in terms of sex. This perception persisted because both ideologies viewed subjugation primarily in terms of sex.

Estelle

However, Inès is not the only woman that Sartre represents through a non-normative sexuality taking into account the ideal woman of the mid-twentieth century; Sartre also portrays Estelle as an atypical woman given her rejection of motherhood and her sexuality which is not within the constraints of marriage or love. Before examining how Sartre represents Estelle's avant-garde sexuality, it is first important to acknowledge the ways in which Estelle conforms to the stereotypical image of the French woman. Throughout *No Exit*, we see that Estelle is vain and materialistic. As we have already seen, her entry into the room is marked by her refusal to sit on

the ugly sofas, which implies that she requires things around her to be beautiful (Sartre 28). Estelle also demands that she herself be beautiful; she is obsessed with her looks. In scene five, for example, Estelle struggles to cope with the fact that there are no mirrors in the bedroom and therefore she cannot see herself. The stage directions read,

"Meanwhile, Estelle is recovering from powder and rouge. She searches for an ice cream around her with a worried air" (Sartre 43).

In one scene of the play, when Estelle is unable to find a mirror to inspect her look, she sways as if about to faint: *"I feel so queer. [She pats herself.] Don't you ever get taken that way? When I can't see myself I begin to wonder if I really and truly exist. I pat myself just to make sure, but it doesn't help much."* With her constant urge to reaffirm her existence, Estelle has developed a compulsion to stare into the mirror:

"I've six big mirrors in my bedroom. There they are. I can see them. But they don't see me. They're reflecting the carpet, the settee, the window—but how empty it is, a glass in which I'm absent! When I talked to people I always made sure there was one near by in which I could see myself. I watched myself talking. And somehow it kept me alert, seeing myself as others saw me..."

Estelle isn't just concerned with being able to see her reflection in mirrors; she also wants to know how other people perceive her. To put it another way, Estelle's challenge is that she is chasing the mode of being of an

object, the in-itself, in the sense that she wants to be what she is—a beautiful, desirable, and proper woman—while simultaneously ignoring the fact that she is not this thing. In other words, she is trying to be something that she is not. She cannot be, given that she has gone to such great lengths to maintain the appearance of innocence). She wants to be seen by other people (that is, she wants to be the object of the awareness of other people), but only in the way that she chooses to be seen by them. And in order for Estelle to feel pleasure when other people do regard her as lovely in the way that she has played at, she needs to forget all the work that she has done to make this happen, as well as all the ways in which she is not the innocent, pure, and lovely "glancing stream" that she would like to be. Only then will she be able to feel the joy that she deserves when others do regard her as lovely. This is one aspect of the fact that Estelle deceives herself.

Through their attitudes, mannerisms, and media appearances, women have socially and culturally built and normalized their bodies as "fetish objects." Thus, Estelle conforms to the stereotypical image of the French woman preoccupied with "fashion, beauty, [and] make-up" (Duchen 22). It is therefore clear that Estelle is represented as a typical woman in this field. However, what counteracts her fixation on her looks is how she expresses her sexuality.

Sartre characterizes Estelle as a woman who pursues sexual gratification outside of marriage and love. The fact that Estelle's sexuality manifests itself in her desire for Garcin, with whom she is neither married nor in love, indicates that Sartre continues to defy traditional gender rules. According to Duchen, "Female sexuality outside marriage was shocking. [The mid 1900's] witnessed

an eroticization of marriage, but complete absence of any joyful, fulfilled relationships outside it" (Duchen 195). In other words, French women at the time Sartre's wrote *No Exit* were not socially permitted to explore 'have an affair' except in the context of heterosexual marriage. In addition, women had to be "in love" with their partner. Duchen explains that in the mid-twentieth century, "sexuality was a wonderful thing as long as it was heterosexual and monogamous, and as long as the couple was 'really in love'" (Duchen 196). However, it is not entirely surprising that Sartre presents Estelle as a woman who seeks satisfaction outside of a loving marriage given her own polygamous practice.

It could be seen from her appearance in the play, that Estelle is attracted to Garcin, but her sexual desire for him does not become explicit until later. She continually wants Garcin to look at her and admire her for her beauty. In fact, in scene five, after Inès affirms Estelle's good looks, Estelle says, "*I would like him to look at me too*" (Sartre 49). Inès responds with: "*Ha! because he is a man*" (Sartre 49). This remark is indicative of Estelle's initial attraction to Garcin—she needs the male gaze. This, coupled with her refusal of Inès' romantic and sexual advances, suggests that Estelle is a heterosexual woman.

Nevertheless, although Estelle adheres to the feminine standard of heterosexuality, she does not practice her sexuality within the constraints of conjugal love. To see this phenomenon more clearly, we will analyze a sexually charged moment between Garcin and Estelle in scene five of *No Exit*:

GARCIN. I will give you what I can. It's not a lot. I will not love you. I know you too well.

ESTELLE. Do you want me?

GARCIN. Yes.
ESTELLE. That's all I want. (Sartre 74)

In this interaction, we see that Estelle is has lust towards Garcin even though they are not in a romantic relationship. In fact, Garcin explicitly tells Estelle that he does not love her when he proclaims "*I will not love you. I know you too well*" (Sartre 74). Estelle seems untroubled by this statement. In fact, she is only asking that he desire her so they can start have an affair. In addition, Sartre presents an alternative to the norm; he does not respect the social expectation that Estelle is married in order to have sex.

Among the main keys to freeing women from all forms of discrimination and oppression by men is to encourage women to own and manage their bodies absolutely without the intervention of religion and the state. Therefore, the sovereignty of women's bodies is an important issue played by radical feminists and other feminist schools. So from this perspective, free-style sex is campaigned, whether same-sex, different religions, or without marriage ties. In essence, women as legitimate body owners have the absolute right to manage and play their organs according to their wishes without having to be intervened by things from outside the owner of the body.

Estelle's extramarital sexuality is not the only way Sartre illustrates how Estelle rejects the role of a stereotypical woman. Perhaps the most glaring demonstration of Estelle's atypical femininity is her rejection of motherhood. Near the end of scene five, Estelle indirectly explains that one reason she is in hell is because she killed her child:

ESTELLE. He wanted to give me a child. There, are you happy?

GARCIN. And you didn't want to.
ESTELLE. No. The child came anyway. I went to spend five months in Switzerland. Nobody knew anything. It was a girl. Roger was with me when she was born. It amused him to have a daughter. Not me.

GARCIN. And then ?
ESTELLE. There was a balcony, above a lake. I brought a big stone. He was screaming, '*Estelle, please, please.*' I hated him. He has seen it all. He leaned over the balcony and saw circles on the lake. (Sartre 61)

At the beginning of this passage, it can be clearly seen that Estelle does not desire to be a mother; she affirms Garcin's assumption that she never wanted a child. Plus, she's going into hiding for five months in Switzerland, which suggests she rejects motherhood so much that she doesn't even want others to know she's pregnant. Perhaps the most obvious indicator of her refusal of motherhood is her act of infanticide. Although Estelle never explicitly admits that she killed her child, this information can be inferred by her language which underlines her revulsion towards motherhood. While describing the act of killing her baby, Estelle speaks abruptly, with very short sentences: "*I brought a big stone [...] I hated it. He saw everything*" (Sartre 61). By creating this effect, Sartre connotes Estelle's indifferent tone. She showed no remorse in killing her child, and it can be clearly seen that she does not regret the action of ending her motherhood. However, the fact that Estelle does not openly admit, at the level of language, that she murdered her child may suggest the shame she feels for the crime. Estelle's relationship with motherhood is therefore complex; beneath her apparent indifference is the

shame she feels, especially considering the fact that motherhood was seen as an essential part of female identity at that time.

The depiction of Estelle as a woman who actively revokes her status as a mother highlights how Sartre portrays her as a woman who challenges the ideal that the French woman is, above all, a mother. Duchen explains that “The ideal of the mother at home was never [criticized as] explicitly undesirable” (Duchen 104). French society would therefore consider it abnormal that Estelle had no desire to be a mother. Duchen also claims that “The ideal mother, in the eyes of the French state, was first and foremost prolific [...] gold medals [Medals of the French family] were awarded to women with ten [children]. If a child died in infancy, he did not [count as living]” (Duchen 103). Taking this into account, Estelle's rejection of motherhood is even more taboo since she immediately ends the life of her child. She's definitely not a "prolific" mom. Thus, the non-normative characterization of Estelle's motherhood is another way Sartre breaks feminine gender rules. Considering her rejection of motherhood in the context of this story described by Duchen, we understand that Estelle would hardly be accepted by French society in Sartre's time, and even today since infanticide is still considered unacceptable.

Here it is known that Sartre wanted to give an overview of non-stereotypical women in France at that time, namely the refusal to become a mother, which was certainly opposed by society at that time. In reproductive health issues, radical-libertarian feminists claim that being a biological mother will drain women's energy, both physically and psychologically. According to them, women should be free to use technology

to prevent and stop reproduction as they wish, without male intervention. Or vice versa, if they want to have children, it must also be based on their will. Either in her own womb, or in the womb of another woman. **By portraying her as a woman who categorically refuses to be a mother, Sartre emphasizes her attempt to "equal herself to the male," showing how Estelle's unsterotypical femininity can be her means to equality.**

5. CONCLUSION

No Exit is succeeded to achieve the goal of presenting a feminist critique of twentieth-century French society. In No Exit, Sartre portrays Inès as a homosexual woman, thus challenging the omnipresence of heteronormativity in female life. Furthermore, Sartre characterizes Estelle as a woman who refuses not only motherhood, but also the idea that sex can only take place within the framework of marriage. In evoking the theme of sin, Sartre criticizes the notion that women who do not adhere to stereotypes of femininity are inherently guilty. Moreover, Sartre suggests that French women are only allowed to express non-normative femininities within the framework of a play. As the title No Exit reminds us, Inès, Estelle, and even Lizzie exhibit their true identities only in a world closed to the rest of society; even in this space they are always reprimanded. Thus, Sartre criticizes the lack of options for non-stereotypical women in French society, as well as the tendency to view these women as inherently "immoral."

In comparison with the roles expected of women in France in the 1940s and 1950s, the female roles that Estelle and Inès play are not stereotyped. We have seen how the two exhibit non-traditional sexualities, and

how Estelle refuses motherhood. By portraying these characters in this manner, Sartre gives voices to women who do not conform to the models of femininity of her time. However, some would argue that its progressive depictions are undermined by the fact that Estelle and Inès are condemned to hell for all eternity. Inès and Estelle act in "bad faith," and are therefore punished by God for their forbidden sexualities. Yes, it is true that the two women are "together forever" in hell (Sartre 95), but that does not mean that they are being punished for their unacceptable femininities. One could also say that Sartre decides to condemn his two wives for criticizing the fact that non-stereotypical femininity is not a viable option for women in France at this time. In other words, Sartre presents Inès and Estelle as stuck in hell because they are not allowed to express their non-normative identities in the outside world. They are only allowed to freely be themselves in the fictional world of *No Exit*. So, one can conclude that one of Sartre's goals in writing this piece is to critique French society, pointing out the ways in which non-stereotypical women are limited by twentieth-century gender norms.

REFERENCES

- Beauvoir, S. d. (1997). *The Second Sex*. United Kingdom: Vintage.
- Dickinson, Torry D. (2003). *Community and the World: Participating in Social Change*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Duchen, C. (2003). *Women's Rights and Women's Lives in France 1944-1968*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis.
- Junaidi, L. M. (2018). *Stereotypes as the Ideology of Feminism in Novels Authorized by Indonesian Female Authors (Ideological Gynocritical Feminist Literary Criticism)*. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, 4(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijllc.v4i1.584>
- Levy, L. (2017). *The Image and the Act: Sartre on Dramatic Theatre. The Philosophy of Theatre, Drama and Acting*.
- Lindburg, E. R. (2014). *Feminist stereotypes: Communal vs. agentic*. 47. http://scholarship.claremont.edu/scrrips_theses/398
- Moraga, C. (1948). *La_Guera_-_Moraga.pdf*.
- Motta, S., Fominaya, C. F., Eschle, C., & Cox, L. (2011). *Interface: a journal for and about social movements Feminism, women's movements and women in movement*. 3(2), 1–32.
- Paludi, Michele A. (2010). *Feminism and Women's Rights Worldwide*. California: ABCCLIO, LLC.
- Sartre, J. P. (2010). *No exit*. *Economist*, 395(8679). <https://ia800700.us.archive.org/11/items/NoExit/NoExit.pdf>
- Tabassum, N., & Nayak, B. S. (2021). *Gender Stereotypes and Their Impact on Women's Career Progressions from a Managerial Perspective*. *IIM Kozhikode Society & Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2277975220975513>
- Timmer, A. (2011). *Toward an anti-stereotyping approach for the European court of human rights*. *Human Rights Law Review*, 11(4), 707–738. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hrlr/ngr036>
- Van Den Hoven, A. (2012). *Sartre's Conception Of Theater: Theory And Practice*. *Sartre Studies*

- International, 18(2), 59–71.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/42705197>
- Wall, M. (2013). Feminist theory, Lesbian parents, and social work. *Sincronía*, 63, 23–20.
- Whelehan, I. (1995). 6 Crisis in Feminism?: Feminist Debates in the '80s and '90s. In *Modern Feminist Thought: From the Second Wave to 'Post-Feminism'* (pp. 125-146). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748632084-008>
- Wilany, E. (2017). Feminism Analysis in the Novel “Woman at Point Zero.” *ANGLO-SAXON: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 8(1), 115. <https://doi.org/10.33373/anglo.v8i1.990>