

**SELF-REPRESENTATION, SISTERHOOD, AND WOMEN'S POWER
REPRESENTED IN AUDRE LORDE'S *ZAMI: A NEW SPELLING OF MY
NAME***

A Thesis

*Submitted in Partial Fulfillment to the Requirement for the Degree of Sarjana
Humaniora*



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APPROVAL PAGE

**Self-representation, Sisterhood, and Women's Power Represented in Audre Lorde's
*Zami: A New Spelling of My Name***

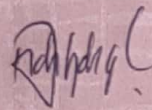
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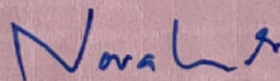
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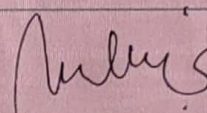
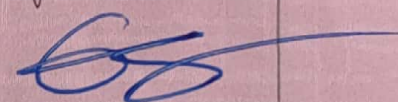
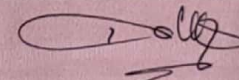
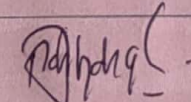


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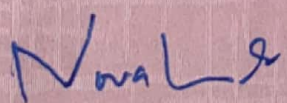
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DECLARATION

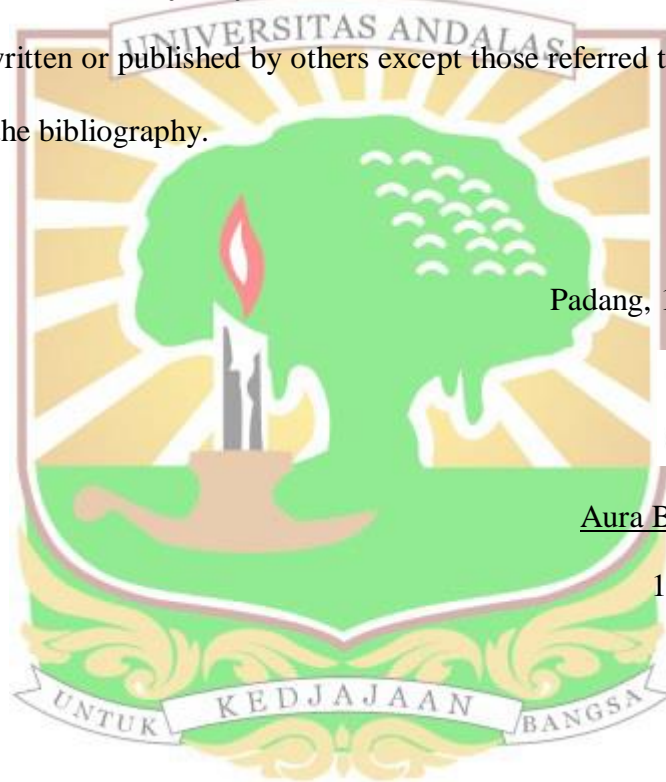
I hereby declare that the thesis entitled “**Self-representation, Sisterhood, and Women’s Power Represented in Audre Lorde’s *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name***” submitted in partial fulfillment as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana Humaniora to the Andalas University, as the result of my work under the guidance of **Dra. Diah Tyahaya Iman, M.Litt., Ph.D.** There have not been forms, ideas written or published by others except those referred to this thesis and mentioned in the bibliography.

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Aura Berliana Melanni

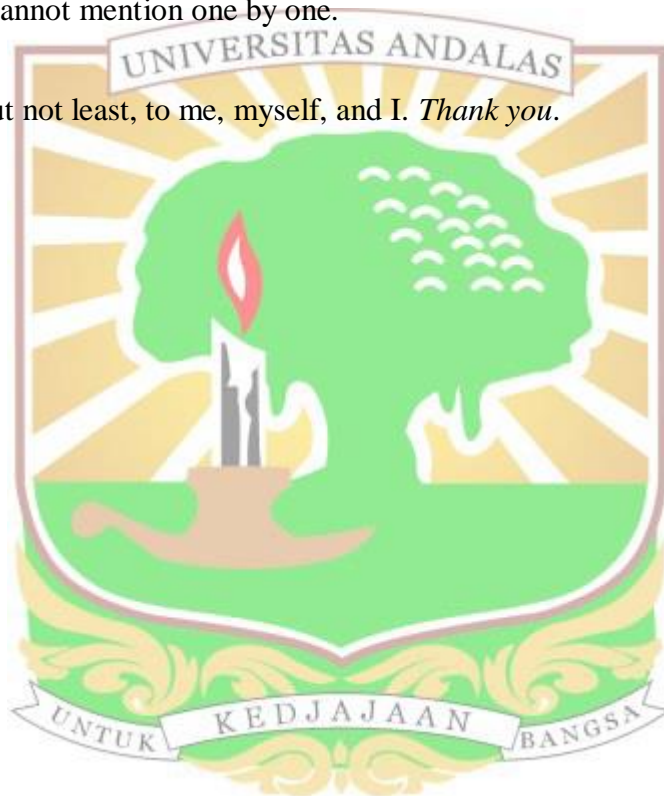
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved and hardworking parents, **Mama Net** and **Pak Erick**. Thank you so much for your endless support, unlimited prayer, and all your patience and affection towards me. Next, my only one sister, **Ayen**. Thank you for always letting me use her room to write this thesis, and thank you for your warm laughs and time we have spent together. Thank you to all my friends that I cannot mention one by one.

Last but not least, to me, myself, and I. *Thank you.*



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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, and the Most Merciful.

First and foremost, All praises to Allah and His blessing. I thank God for all the opportunities, convenience, health, and patience He has given to me. Peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the model of excellent conduct, merit, and virtue.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, **Dra. Diah Tyahaya Iman, M.Litt., Ph.D.**, who has patiently guided me in completing this thesis. Her brilliant ideas helped me in doing this thesis. Without her help, this thesis would not have been possible. Also, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my examiners, **Marliza Yeni, S.S., M.A.**, **Edria Sandika, S.S., M. Hum.**, and **Dra. Eva Najma, M. Hum.**, for guiding me with their helpful insights in the completion of this thesis.

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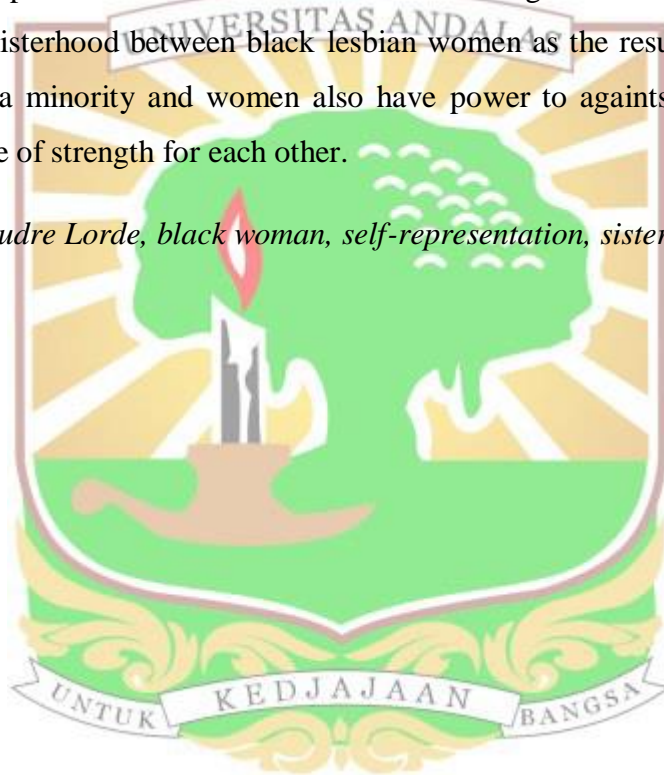
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Abstract

This thesis analyzes Audre Lorde's novel entitled *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. The aim of this research is to examine the self-representation, sisterhood, and women's power experienced by the main character. This research is conducted using the theory of feminist literary criticism by Bell Hooks, combined with objective approach by M.H. Abrams. This research uses qualitative method and the result is presented using descriptive method. After analyzing *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, the writer argues that Lorde clearly presents self-representation of black lesbian as a strong and self-assured woman. She portrays sisterhood between black lesbian women as the result of their same conditions as a minority and women also have power to againts descrimination and as a source of strength for each other.

Keywords: *Audre Lorde, black woman, self-representation, sisterhood, power*



ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang representasi diri, persaudaraan wanita, dan kekuatan wanita Audre Lorde yang tercermin dalam karyanya yang berjudul *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Hal tersebut digambarkan oleh Lorde melalui tokoh utama cerita. Penelitian ini dilakukan menggunakan teori kritik sastra feminis oleh Bell Hooks, serta didukung dengan pendekatan objektif oleh M.H. Abrams. Penelitian ini memakai metode kualitatif dan hasilnya disajikan memakai metode deskripsi. Setelah menganalisa novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, penulis berpendapat bahwa Lorde menggambarkan representasi diri dari wanita kulit hitam adalah sebagai wanita yang tangguh dan percaya diri. Dia menggambarkan persaudaraan wanita antara wanita kulit hitam sebagai hasil dari persamaan keadaan mereka dan wanita juga memiliki kekuatan untuk melawan deskriminasi dan sebagai sumber kekuatan antar sesama wanita.

Kata kunci: *Audre Lorde, wanita kulit hitam, representasi diri, persaudaraan wanita, kekuatan*

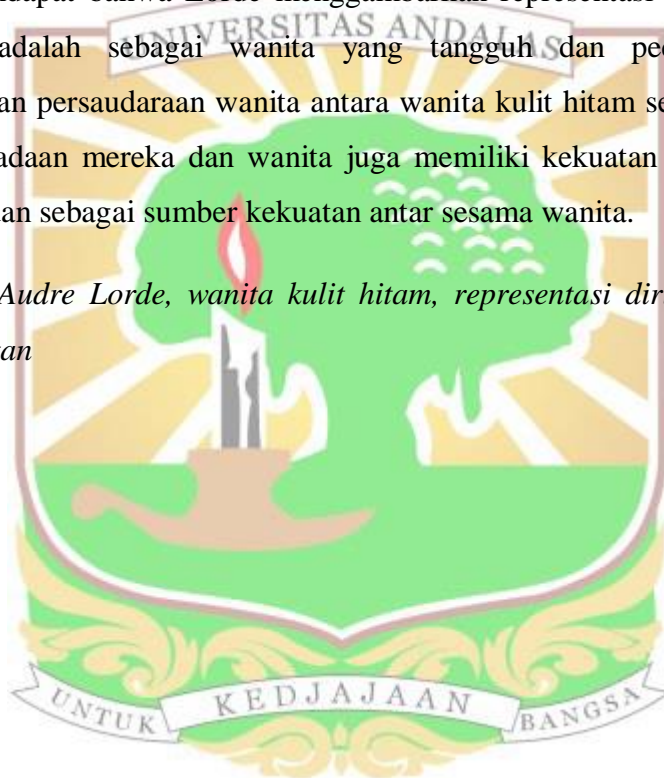


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Today, the world is more aware of the black woman's movement, black feminism, and racism. Back in America in 1950s, discrimination and racism were the treatment received every day by black people, especially black women. Some various types of discrimination received by black women such as gender discrimination, oppression, sexual harassment, and others. In human relations, women are frequently considered powerless and weak. "Women who are the most victimized by sexist oppression; women who are mentally, physically, and spiritually battered down on a daily basis; women who are powerless to improve their situation in life. They constitute the silent majority. They accept their situation in life without inquiry, without organized protest, without collective wrath or rage, which is a sign of their subjugation" (Hooks 1984). As time went by, along with blacks fighting against racism and discrimination, black women also carried out a movement to make life better. Braxton, writes about how black women's autobiographers have used "language as a weapon" against various forms of oppression (1989). Literary work has been one of the crucial pieces of evidence that represent human history issues. Many issues can be discussed in literary works, some of them are about self-representation, sisterhood, and power.

There are several literary works written by black women. They discuss so many issues from racism, black women's oppression, to black women's movements. Some recent works by black women writers are *An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones (2018), *Magical Negro* by Morgan Parker (2019), and *Queenie* by Candice Certy-Williams (2019). One of the literary works that discuss self-representation, sisterhood, and power is the novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* by Audre Lorde. She is also one of the figures of the black women's movement in literature. Lorde was born on February 18, 1934, in New York. She is a writer, poet, black lesbian, and feminist activist. Lorde is an African American writer who has written several poems including, *From a Land Where Other People Live* (1972), and nominated for a National Book Award, *The New York Head Shop and Museum* (1974), and *The Black Unicorn* (1978). In addition to poetry, Lorde also wrote longer works such as *The Cancer Journals* (1980), *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982), and the essay collection *A Burst of Light* (1988), which won the National Book Award. Lorde's works focus on the black women's movement, civil rights, and the struggle for LGBTQ equality.

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name was published in 1982. Lorde herself said that the genre of this book is biomythography, which combines biography, history, and myth. *Zami* tells the story of the main character's life from childhood and the important lessons she learned along her life journey. Lorde also tells how she grew up, her relationship with her mother, and how

she discovered her sexuality as a lesbian. She also recounts her journey and experiences as a black lesbian in the United States in the 1950s.

In this book, Lorde tells about her childhood when she received discrimination, pressure, and racism, and how Lorde found her identity as a black woman and a lesbian. Lorde refers to herself as a black woman and black lesbian, which is how she represents herself. According to Woollacott (1998), self-representation means representations of the self, which can be through any number of media but purposes are through discursive productions. Usually, a sense of solidarity arises when we experience a similar situation. In *Zami*, the case is the solidarity that arises because of the condition of fellow black women who experience discrimination, oppression, and racism. In the novel, it is mentioned that Lorde has contact with women who have a similar situation as black women, and finally a sense of trust and solidarity is established which is called sisterhood. Maria C. Lugones defines Sisterhood as the thought of sometimes in feminist discourse as a metaphorical ideal and sometimes as a metaphor for the reality of relationships among women (Weiss and Friedman 1995).

As known, black people have a long history of getting their freedom from slavery. In addition, they also had to fight racism, especially by African Americans. Josep stated Black power movement began to develop alongside the civil rights movement between the 1950s and 1960s in The United States (2006). This black power movement was a turning point in the relationship between black and white in the United States. At that time, black people

including black women began to think about their existence and respect themselves as human beings. In addition to fighting against slavery and racism, black women also fought against race and gender discrimination, oppression, and sexual assault in their way. With the higher awareness of black women for the discrimination they received, they need the power to free themselves from the gender and race discrimination they faced.

This study will focus to analyze self-representation, sisterhood, and power in the novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. The reason why the writer chooses to analyze the three topics above is that the writer wants to discover how a black woman writer represents other black women. The writer chooses the novel because it will be interesting to examine how the author portrays self-representation, sisterhood, and power from the main character of the novel, Lorde's viewpoint as a black woman herself. The writer also wants to uncover more about the self-representation, sisterhood, and power experienced by a black woman in the novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

There are several problems in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Racism, love between women, and conflict with family. The genre of the book is biomythography which combines biography, history, and myth, so this book is not fiction, yet based on the author's experiences. I want to study Lorde's concern about self-representation, sisterhood, and power as a black woman. The writer chose self-representation, sisterhood, and power because these

problems are often discussed throughout the story. the author represents black women and what they want and how they bond relationships with other women which through the same condition, also the power they have as black women. By examining Lorde's messages about self-representation, sisterhood, and power as black women from the novel, I can elaborate on her messages regarding those issues.

1.3. Scope of the Research

Many topics can be discussed in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. In this research, the writer will focus on the topic of self-representation, sisterhood, and power as a black woman in the novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. These topics have not been widely discussed before, so the writer wants to discuss these topics and discover how a black woman writer represents other black women. The writer limited these three topics into three parts. First, explain how Lorde portrays self-representation in her novel. Second, it explains the relationship that the characters have in the novel. And lastly, what kind of power of black women's movements are described in the novel.

1.4. Research Questions

- a. How does the author portray self-representation in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*?
- b. How is sisterhood among black women is portrayed in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*?

- c. How does *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* represent power by women?

1.5. Objective of the Research

In this research, the writer wants to examine self-representation, sisterhood, and power experienced by the main character in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. The writer wants to discover how the author portrays self-representation, sisterhood, and power in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Self-representation is how black women represent themselves and how they struggle for their rights. I want to examine how Lorde portrays black women's sisterhood and black power movement affects their lives.

1.6. Review of Related Literature

To support this research, the writer read several related studies that explain the same research object with different topics and different objects but have similar problems. The writer read some articles of related studies to find different views and opinions to understand the issue.

First, an article was written by Monica B. Pearl titled "'Sweet Home": Audre Lorde's *Zami* and the legacies of American Writing" (2009). This article points out that "*Zami* derives from two extant American literary traditions, the African American slave narrative, and the lesbian coming out story - rendering it, after all, not a marginal text, but rather a text that falls obviously and firmly in a tradition of American literature" (Pearl 297). Based on the article, the genre of *Zami* is biomythography. Why is this book called

biomythography because *Zami* doesn't fit into the existing category or genre in American literature such as African American autobiography, African American literature, lesbian autobiography, or women's autobiography but *Zami* covers all of these things and that's the reason why it is called biomythography. This article focuses on the relationship between Audre Lorde's work, *Zami* with the legacies of American writing. Pearl stated that Audre Lorde's *Zami* ends with two forms of American writing, the slave narrative and the coming out story. The relationship between Audre Lorde's work, *Zami*, and the legacies of American writing is depicted by the author in detail and very well.

Second, an article by Barbara DiBenhard entitled "*Zami: A Portrait of An Artist As A Black Lesbian*" (1991). DiBenhard studies the artist's portrayal as a black lesbian in the novel *Zami* using Lorde's experience as a black lesbian to open our conception of the female writer without generalizing the experiences of other women. In *Zami*, we will find other alternatives to the model of female development as new faces of poets and female creativity. The portrait of the poet as a black lesbian includes many things. The portrait of the artist's relationship itself can identify and utilize the powers of the women around her is an important thing to consider. As the portrait of a black lesbian artist, *Zami* shows us to acknowledge all parts of ourselves. Barbara DiBenhard includes many quotes and explains quite a in detail about Lorde's experience as a black woman and becoming the portrait of a black lesbian artist.

Third, Maja Milatovic in her article entitled “The Love of Women, Kind as Well as Cruel: Feminist Alliances and Contested Spaces in Audre Lorde’s *Zami: A New Spelling Of My Name*” (2014), sees *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* as an interesting and forward-thinking novel that addresses a variety of contemporary issues such as the erasure of black women's voices, intersectionality, and establishing feminist alliances across differences. The article examines how *Zami* uses ambiguity and difference to depict the challenges in forming feminist alliances. This article claims that biomythography refuses judgment by providing spaces for negotiation and critical thinking, as well as mutual acknowledgment, debate, and development. I suppose this analysis would be better if the author explains contested spaces in more detail.

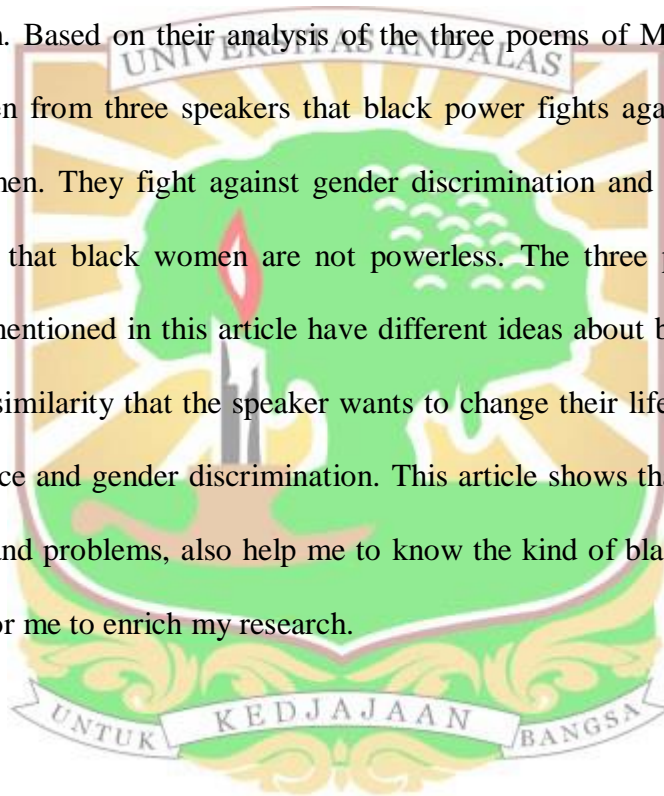
Fourth, another article that examined *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* is “New Living the Old in a New Way: Home and Queer Migrations in Audre Lorde’s *Zami*” (2011) by Stella Bolaki. This essay examines Audre Lorde's *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, which rethinks limiting formulations of queer and diasporic subjects' relationship to the space of 'home'. Bolaki starts by showing how Lorde, leaving from the Anglo-American tradition of the lesbian, queers, and the childhood home demonstrates the dynamic relationship between ethnicity and sexuality in female queer diasporic narratives. It then turns to the lesbian community as a theoretical home and traces the process of ‘making home’ exemplified in *Zami*. She argues that *Zami* challenges idealized conceptions of home and belonging without

abandoning these concepts altogether. The article shows that leaving the old "home" which is the childhood home to a new "home" which is the lesbian community as queer black women. This is not against the childhood home, but a process to accept ourselves. This article gives me more insights that *Zami* can be read as a text that illustrates how queer migrations are not merely against the childhood home but rather reprocess and reclaim it differently.

Fifth, an article by Folabomi L. Ogunyemi published in 2021 entitled "Trauma and Empowerment in Tina McElroy Ansa's *Ugly Way*", This article examines the novel's thematic junction of Black feminist theory and trauma theory through close reading. *Ugly Ways* portrays African American women as multifaceted human beings, going beyond historical, literary, and popular representation. In Tina McElroy Ansa's *Ugly Ways*, Ogunyemi argued that the change of the main character from the novel is an act of empowerment and an expression of psychic pain. She also looked at a connection that the novel makes between black feminist theory and trauma theory. When African American women are freed from the constraints of the Strong Black Woman image, their response to trauma can be liberating. I note that Ogunyemi examines that Ansa accepts her protagonist's entire humanity and investigates how everyday incidents may be distressing in the lives of African American women. Recognizing that African American women, too, have emotional and mental boundaries confronts society and a literary tradition that places unreasonable expectations of invulnerability on African American women. I would say that the author explains her thoughts in detail and measured. Also,

the author divides her explanation into several parts so that the reader is clear in reading her explanations.

Sixth, an article entitled "Black Power in Maya Angelou's *Still I Rise*, *Phenomenal Woman*, and *Weekend Glory*" was written by Silvania Krisna and Liliek Soelistyo in 2013. They discuss the black power inside the three poems of Maya Angelou. They argue that there are different kinds of black power in each poem. Based on their analysis of the three poems of Maya Angelou, it can be seen from three speakers that black power fights against injustice as black women. They fight against gender discrimination and oppression, and also show that black women are not powerless. The three poems of Maya Angelou mentioned in this article have different ideas about black power, but it has the similarity that the speaker wants to change their life to be better by fighting race and gender discrimination. This article shows that black power's struggles and problems, also help me to know the kind of black power which is useful for me to enrich my research.



CHAPTER II

THEORIES AND METHODS

2.1 Theoretical Framework

In this research, I applied the objective theory by Abrams. This approach focuses on the analysis of the text or the book in isolation. In theory, the objective approach separates the work of art from any extraneous elements. Art is a piece of art in itself, unaffected by any outside factors that may be involved. For something that is already in the works, the analysis by itself is sufficient. Abrams (1971) states that "the objective approach, in general, is the principle of considering works of art in isolation from all these external factors of reference, analyze it as a self-contained entity formed by its parts in their internal relationships, and sets out to judge it solely by those criteria which are intrinsic to its own way of existence". This approach is used because the writer only focuses on self-representation, sisterhood, and power as a black woman in the book itself. To examines the author's self-representation, sisterhood, and power represented by the characters in the story, I applied Feminist literary criticism.

The writer applies feminist literary criticism proposed by Bell Hooks. Feminism is a social movement or ideology about having equal rights and opportunities for women in many aspects. The word feminism itself was from Charles Fourier, which has experienced many changes over time. It's

a lot about the movement and history of feminism, but that has changed a lot over time. There are some definitions of feminism from experts. Simone De Beauvoir defines feminism as a literary theory that emphasizes the differences between men and women and criticizes various forms of male domination over women (Carter 2006). Tyson defines feminist criticism as "how literature (and other cultural productions) reinforces or undermines the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women (2006). Hooks in her book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984) defines feminism as a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. Feminist literary criticism is mainly focused on women's issues. In this research, the issue is self-representation as a black lesbian. Hooks (1984), argues that within the feminist movement lesbian have worked hardest to call attention to the struggle to end heterosexist oppression.

In this research, I use feminist literary criticism to examine how black women experience sexual oppression and sexual liberation in a novel by Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Early feminist activism around sexuality focused so much attention on just the politics of granting females the right to be sexual whenever we wanted to be, with whomever we wanted to be sexual with, that there was little feminist education for critical consciousness teaching us how to respect our bodies in an anti-sexist way. Hooks in her book *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984) states feminist movement is acknowledging fighting against sexual

oppression. Throughout the length of the feminist movement, there has been a tendency to carry out the struggle to end sexual oppression.

The history of feminism is divided into three waves. The first wave of feminism occurred in the mid of nineteenth century. According to Lisa B. Sharlach (2009) at first, the goal of first-wave feminism was to advocate a wide array of rights for women. With time, the first wave sharpened its focus more narrowly to the goal of winning women's right to vote. The second wave occurred in the 1960s in the United States. In this wave, issues such as equality and discrimination are discussed. Suzanne M. Spencer-Wood, states that second-wave structural feminist theories analyze patriarchal social structures enforcing women's subordination, and sometimes advocate women-controlled social structures (2017). The third wave of feminism occurred in the middle 1980s and 1990s in the United States. The role of the activists in the second wave was very big and have a big impact on third-wave feminism. The activists in the third wave criticize and complete the works that cannot be completed in the second wave. This wave supported women to work toward gender, racial, economic, social justice, also sexual liberation. R. Claire Snyder said third-wave feminism reintroduces the ideal of sexual liberation into a feminist discourse that many believe came, to prioritize gender equality over sexual autonomy and to view sexual desire as problematic (2010). The third wave characterized women as powerful, aggressive, and in charge of their own sexuality in response to traditional portrayals of

women as passive, weak, and demanding. The third wave was much more welcoming to women and girls of color than the first and second waves. It is mean black women are also included

The black women's feminist movements have long struggled against racism and discrimination, besides that, they were also fighting for gender and sexual freedom. Black feminist thought can build a collective identity among African-American women about the dimensions of a black women's point of view. Also, black feminist thought can provide a new perspective on ourselves and our world for African-American women (Hills Collins 2000). This inspired African-American writers to write literary works that tell about the struggles of black women in fighting racism, discrimination, and fighting for gender and sexual freedom. In this research, the topic is self-representation, sisterhood, and power as black women so the writer will focus on third-wave feminism with black women. In the third wave, self-representation can be seen from how black women fight racism and discrimination so they can represent themselves as black women. Also, they fight for gender and sexual freedom so they can freely represent themselves as what they want. The power that black women show from the third wave is the power to fight racism, discrimination, and gender oppression so they also can have a better education, the power to have the rights for vote, and others. They also have the power to fight for sexual freedom, so they can freely choose their sexuality.

2.2 Methods of the Research

In conducting this research there are three steps involved in the process. These are collecting the data, analyzing the data, and then presenting the result of the research.

2.2.1. Collecting the Data

In collecting the data, I applied the library research method. According to Mary W. George in *The Elements of Library Research* (2008), library research is a form of systematic investigation inquiry that employs a set of tools, rules, and methodologies. This research requires two types of data, primary data, and secondary data. The primary data is *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* by Audre Lorde published in 1982. The secondary data includes articles, journals, books, and critical essays related to the topic.

2.2.2. Analyzing the Data

In this research, I applied the qualitative method. According to Bryman in *Analyzing Qualitative Data* (1994), Qualitative research emphasized the research process, demonstrating that it cannot be reduced to certain procedures or stages, but rather is a dynamic process that connects problems, theories, and methodologies. In order to analyze the data, first, I read and studied the storyline of *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* and took notes regarding self-representation, sisterhood, and power

in the novel. Then, I use feminist literary criticism proposed by Bell Hooks to analyze self-representation, sisterhood, and power. After that, I analyze how the author portrays self-representation, sisterhood, and power through the main character in the novel using expressive theory by Abrams.

2.2.3. Presenting the Result of the Research

Since this research uses a qualitative method, I use a descriptive way to present the result of the research. According to Jennifer Mason in *Qualitative Researching 2nd Edition* (2002), the purpose of qualitative research is to develop a comprehensive and contextual understanding based on large amounts of specific and assigned data. The result of the research is presented in narrative form which was elaborated on and proven by the data that was found.

In order to present the analysis of the research, I present them in several chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which contains the background of the research, identification of the problem, research questions, objectives of the research, scope of the research, and review of related literature. The second chapter is about the theories and methods used in this research. The third chapter is the preliminary analysis. The fourth chapter is the result of the analysis. Then, The last chapter consists of the conclusion of the previous chapters and my suggestion for the next research.

CHAPTER III

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF *ZAMI: A NEW SPELLING OF MY NAME*

BY AUDRE LORDE

In this chapter, the writer conducts a preliminary analysis of the book, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* to explain the intrinsic structures of the book. This preliminary analysis focuses on the brief analysis of the novel's characters, setting, plot, point of view, and theme. This preliminary analysis will help the writer to explain the book, which is the primary data of this research.

3.1. Characters

One of the essential elements in literary work is character. According to Klarer in his book *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, "Character is figure presented in a literary text, including main character or protagonist and minor character" (2004). Characters are significant in a story because they make a story work. In fiction, characters divide into major characters and minor characters. First, major characters are important characters and the center of the story. Major characters include protagonists and antagonists. The protagonist is the main character, and all their attitudes and choices will affect the course of the story. Usually, the protagonist is a role model with good morality. Furthermore, the antagonist is also one of the major characters where usually they are the protagonist's opponent. The antagonist is usually the source of the conflict that the protagonist will fight in a story. Second, minor

characters. Minor characters do not have a role as necessary as the major characters, but they also have a supporting role for the major characters. Sometimes, minor characters can also be the reason for the decisions that major characters make for the story's continuation.

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name has seven characters, including major and minor characters. The writer only focuses on a few characters who have a prominent and influential role in the plot and have a close relationship with the main character of the book, Audre Lorde.

3.3.1. Audre Lorde

Audre Lorde is the main character and author of *Zami: A New Spelling of my Name*. Lorde is the last child of West Indian immigrant couple Byron and Linda Lorde. She has two older sisters, Phyllis and Helen Lorde. In the first few chapters, we meet little Lorde, who tells us about her mother's hometown, Grenada. Lorde grows up with her parents' shield and protection from racism as a child. When she graduated from high school, Lorde left her parent's house and began her search for what home is, what love is, and what it means to be independent.

The writer sees Lorde as a confident and smart woman because she takes part in the selection of the class president of sixth grade, and she believes that she will be chosen because she is the smartest girl in the class. "I knew I was the smartest girl in the class. I had to win."(61). Lorde is also depicted as an independent woman because she immediately leaves

her parent's house after graduating high school. "Two weeks after I graduated from high school, I moved out of my parent's home." (103). In my opinion, Lorde is a passionate woman, As she portrays herself in *Zami*, she is a strong woman, and the source of her power is the women who have been on her journey. Lorde always follows her heart because that is her nature and partly because she grew up isolated. She is creative, and we can see how she often expresses her feelings by writing poetry throughout the book.

3.3.2. Linda Lorde

Linda is one of the major characters in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. She is Lorde's mother and a West Indian immigrant who immigrates to America with her husband. She is a strong woman, a strict and assertive parent to her daughters. She tries to protect her daughters from racism by pretending it does not exist. According to Lorde, she is depicted as a powerful woman who knows everything. She knows about mixing oils for bruises and rashes and about disposing of all toenail clippings and hair from the comb, about bundling up against the wicked cold, about food, and how to frighten children into behaving in public. She does know that the Museum of National History is a good place to take your children if you wanted them to grow smart.

Linda is portrayed differently from other mothers, but Lorde could not figure out the difference. Linda's difference for Lorde is a positive aspect and special, but sometimes she feels that it is one of the things that

caused her childhood sorrow. "...But most often, her difference was like the season or a cold day or a steamy night in June. It just was, with no explanation or evocation necessary." (16). In my opinion, she is a strong mother. It is mentioned that Linda raises her children strictly. Based on the author, Lorde sometimes feels that she is an unloving mother. And later, Lorde realizes that her mother is quite powerless. As she said, "...I realize now, to hide from us as children the many instances of her powerlessness. Being Black and foreign and female in New York City in the twenties and thirties was not simple, particularly when she was quite light enough to pass for white, but her children weren't." (17).

3.3.3. Genevieve (Gennie)

Genevieve or Gennie is a major character in the book. She is Lorde's best friend in high school. The author describes Gennie as a cheerful and lively child. She practices ballet, but Lorde has never seen her dance in front of her. Gennie is the friend who teaches Lorde how to make friends in addition to what she had always been doing. Lorde and Gennie also smoke cigarettes, burn marshmallows on her mother's bed, steal money from their mother's purse, and roam on Fifth Avenue while singing a song. "She was my first true friend." (87), as Lorde said.

Gennie meets her father for the first time and completely falls under his charming net. She wants to live with him, but her mother refuses. Gennie threatened to kill herself, causing her mother to finally allow her to live with her father. Gennie and Lorde see each other less and

less, but every time they meet, Lorde sees there is something different about Gennie. One day, Lorde then gets words from Gennie's mother that Gennie attempted suicide again, which worked this time. Later, Lorde finds out that Gennie was sexually assaulted by her father. This is one example of a woman can not feel safe even with her father. Gennie's death is painful for Lorde and makes her lose not only a good friend but the first woman she loved. Gennie's death makes Lorde mourns this loss for a long time.

In my opinion, Gennie is a good friend to Lorde. She teaches Lorde how to enjoy their youth. Gennie persuades Lorde, who grew up with strict rules from her mother do some mischievous things like smoking and stealing their mother's money. This causes Lorde to feel very lost when Gennie dies. Also, one of the reasons Lorde wants to leave her parents' house is because her father underestimated her relationship with Gennie. "The precipitating factors in my leaving home were some disparaging remarks my father made about Gennie..." (104).

3.3.4. Ginger

Ginger is a major character in the book. She is the first woman to have a romantic relationship with Lorde. She is Lorde's co-worker at a factory in Stamford. Ginger often talked to her. Ginger talked, and Lorde listened. Lorde thinks if she keeps quiet, people would think she understands what they are talking about. Ginger invites Lorde over to her

house for dinner. Sometimes, Lorde knows that Ginger is flirting with her, but she does not know how to respond.

Ginger is romantic; she takes Lorde to her favorite spot, a wooden hill on the west edge of town. They spent their time talking. Later, Ginger asks Lorde if she is gay or not. Lorde just smiles and keeps quiet. Gennie's question makes Lorde hesitates to answer it. She could have said, "I don't know," but that would be a loss to her. She couldn't deny what she had recently embraced about her sexuality. Ginger reassured Lorde that she only needed to say yes or no. Lorde said yes, but don't know where this would take her. Ginger is also the first woman to have sexual contact with Lorde. However, Ginger does not provide an explication of her relationship with Lorde. After some time passed, Ginger began to get close to other women. Ginger and Lorde begin to talk less, and their relationship also begins to strain. But Ginger doesn't seem to have much of a problem with that.

In my opinion, Ginger is a bold and straightforward character, as she asks Lorde if she is gay or not. By Ginger asking about Lorde's sexuality, Ginger indirectly makes Lorde more sure about her sexual orientation, whereas previously, she was still hesitant to answer yes directly. "I certainly couldn't say *I don't know*. Actually, I was at a loss as to what to say. I could not bring myself to deny what I had just this past summer decided to embrace; besides, to say no would be to admit being one of the squares. Yet, to say yes might commit me to prove it, like with

the vodka.” (135). Ginger is also described by Lorde as a woman of the world. She knows everything.

3.3.5. Eudora

Eudora is a major character and a woman Lorde meets in Cuernavaca, Mexico. She is older than Lorde. Eudora is a friendly woman, she invites Lorde to drink coffee at her house. Shortly after entering Eudora's house, Lorde immediately knows that Eudora is gay. Eudora is a woman who helps Lorde a lot during her time in Mexico. "We shared a good laugh over the elusive cues for mutual recognition among lesbians. Eudora was the first woman I'd met who spoke about herself as a lesbian rather than as "gay," which was a word she hated." (162). Eudora also often accompanied Lorde to visit many places in Mexico.

Eudora is described as a strong and reliable woman for Lorde. In my opinion, Eudora is respected by Lorde. She is kind and can make Lorde feel comfortable when she is with her to the point Lorde dares to invite Eudora to sleep together. "It was in Mexico that I stopped feeling invisible. In the streets, in the buses, in the markets, in the Plaza, in the particular attention within Eudora's eyes." (173). Eudora makes Lorde's time in Mexico becomes positive and meaningful. She is the one who broke her relationship with Lorde because she still has an unresolved problem with her ex-lover. For that, when Eudora decides to end her relationship with her, Lorde feels hurt, sad and feels that she has lost one of her sources of power. The author depicts Eudora's character as a strong

and brilliant woman. She is also a reliable person, Lorde can enjoy her time in Mexico because of her help.

3.3.6. Muriel

Muriel is portrayed as an Italian woman Lorde meets when she returns to New York from Mexico. She is one of the major characters in the book. Ginger said that Muriel and Lorde were similar. Muriel also likes to write poetry like Lorde. Muriel also makes Lorde talk about Gennie, which she had never previously told about Gennie to anyone. Then, Muriel also told about her friend who also died. Muriel is the woman who can bring Lorde back to joy when she returns to New York. "...and I realized that for the first time since I'd come home from Mexico, I felt lighthearted and excited again." (186). Muriel is a woman who could always understand Lorde's words and her pain that she couldn't describe in words.

The author describes Muriel as a close friend of Lorde. She moved to Lorde's apartment when Lorde's roommate moved to Chicago. Muriel is described as having schizophrenic disease, and Lorde said she would protect her for the rest of her life. Muriel is the one that Lorde wants if she has to commit. Muriel and Lorde's relationship starts to fall apart when Lynn, a friend they used to live with, takes their saving money away. After that, Muriel seemed to have a mental breakdown. She could not have a job and began to cheat on Lorde.

From my point of view, Muriel is a gentlewoman. She is one of the women who managed to make Lorde comfortable, especially after her return from Mexico. They have a happy time together. Muriel also makes Lorde confident in their relationship even though they get strange stares from people along the way because one of them is black and the other is white or because they are gay. Even when their relationship ended, Lorde still cared about Muriel for some time until she decided not to anymore.

3.3.7. Afrekete (Kitty)

Afrekete, also known as Kitty, is a black woman whom Lorde meets at a bar. She is one of the minor characters in the book. Lorde doesn't say much about Kitty in her books. However, Lorde's love affair with Kitty is important and meaningful because, with Kitty, she shares and talks about how being a black woman. The author describes Kitty as pretty, bold, and sensual, and she teaches Lorde much about love. Also, she is the one who teaches Lorde what home is, not where it is. She also helps Lorde to rename herself "Zami". "I never saw Afrekete again, but her print remains upon my life with the resonance and power of an emotional tattoo." (253).

From my point of view, Kitty is a smart and independent woman. She is like a teacher for Lorde, who teaches her about home and love.

3.2. Plot

A plot cannot be separated from literary works because the plot is one of the important factors that form the main basis of a literary work. Klarer states, “plot is the logical interaction of the several thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original scenario as provided at the beginning of the narrative” (2004).

At the beginning of the story, the author introduces a story about her parents, especially her mother and her hometown in Grenada. The first few chapters tell how Lorde's parents lived in Grenada. Also, a brief story of her relationship with her two older sisters. From the beginning of the story, it is evident that Lorde makes this story about how the women in her life influenced her to find out her identity. One of the women is her mother, Linda. Linda is a powerful and strict woman. Racism is inseparable from Lorde's life, although her parents do everything they can to protect their children from racism. This causes Lorde to grow up not knowing that the bad attitude people show to them is racism. Even so, Lorde's relationship with her mother is quite complicated. When Lorde was a teenager, Lorde began to feel the desire to have privacy and freedom, but the mother was so strict with her children that slowly Lorde's relationship with her mother became a little strained. In my opinion, Lorde introduces the story with the story of her mother's hometown is quite interesting. I think this is because she wants to show the readers the roots of herself as a black woman.

The story's rising action began when Lorde's best friend, Gennie died by suicide. She was Lorde's best friend, whom she cherished and loved the most. Gennie's death brings great sadness and sorrow to Lorde. After graduating high school, Lorde decided to leave her parents' house. This is because it is influenced by the factor that her relationship with her mother is strained and complicated. After Lorde left her parents' house, Lorde started her new life. She did things she had never done before. She was in a relationship with a white man named Peter. Lorde learned that she was pregnant after her relationship with Peter ended. She decided to abort the pregnancy. After that, Lorde decided to have a relationship with a woman. Lorde met Ginger, her co-worker at a factory. Lorde felt Ginger often flirting with her, and one day she asked Lorde if she was gay. Lorde said yes, and they started their relationship. From my point of view, this part is interesting because we can see how Lorde changes from a heterosexual woman to a homosexual woman.

The climax is a turning point in a story. The climax in *Zami* is when Lorde decides to go to Mexico, specifically in Cuernavaca. Moving to Mexico is her main goal. In Mexico, Lorde feels accepted as a colored person. She feels that she is not invisible anymore. In Mexico, she met Eudora, a woman who was older than her. Lorde immediately found out that Eudora was gay right after she walked into Eudora's house when she was invited for coffee. They became close and eventually formed a relationship. Lorde has an important and good time in Mexico. However, their relationship had to end because Eudora still had problems with her ex-lover and didn't want Lorde to get into it. Not long

after that, Lorde returned to New York. In my opinion, the climax in *Zami* is interesting because Lorde finally feels accepted as a person of color, and she meets a woman she respects and loves. Even though in the end, their relationship has to end because of unresolved problems.

This story falling actions are after returning to New York, Lorde meets Muriel, an Italian woman. They started getting to know each other and dating. Lorde's relationship with Muriel was the most serious of her relationships with other women. Even if Lorde had to commit to a relationship, Lorde believed Muriel was the right person. They also decided to live together in an apartment. One day, their friend Lynn had been through so much, so Lorde and Muriel were happy to let her stay in their apartment. However, in the end, Lynn ran away with the money. After the incident, Lorde and Muriel's relationship seems to have some problems. Lorde finds out that Muriel is having an affair. Lorde feels quite sad about her breakup with Muriel because her relationship with Muriel was one of the most serious relationships she had.

The resolution happens when Lorde meets again with Kitty, short for Afreekete. They had met several years ago. They meet again at a bar and dance together. This summer was spent by Lorde and Kitty dancing, making love, and attending clubs where Kitty sang. They shared laughter and cried together. They shared dreams and shared their stories of being black women. For some time, Lorde has not seen Kitty, and she got a note from Kitty that she was going to Atlanta for a show and was meeting her daughter. One year later, Lorde graduated from library school and named herself "Zami" a

Carriacou name for a woman who works together as friends or lovers. In the end, Lorde managed to find out what home is, what love is, and about herself.

Overall the plot of this story is quite interesting. The author describes the plot going slow in the beginning until the climax, but after that, the plot turns to be more intense until the end of the story. In my opinion, the author does not depict the climax of the story interestingly, but after the falling actions, the story captured the reader's attention. It is because of some events in the book like the main character, Lorde experiencing a betrayal from her loved one. Then, the way she starts to move on and get to know herself better.

3.3. Setting

The setting is another aspect element of fiction in literary work. The setting usually relates to the place, time, and social environment in which a story takes place. Klarer says, "Setting is another aspect traditionally included in analyses of prose fiction, and it is relevant to discussions of other genres, too" (2004).

The author describes, there are three main settings of place specifically, Harlem, New York, and Mexico. The first one is in Harlem, a common town for black people. Harlem was where Lorde grew up. The author portrays she gets racist treatment in this place since she was a child. The second one is New York City. After she left her parents' house in Harlem, Lorde lived in various apartments around the city. The author explains New York is a place where Lorde starts her new life after leaving her parent's house, but the author

does not portray New York in detail. The last place in Mexico. Here, in Mexico Lorde mostly felt free because people there are very tolerant to black people. The author also describes the setting of times of this story is from the 1930s to the 1950s. This was an era where racism, especially in the United States, was something that black people had to deal with. The author portrays quite clearly how the people around her treat her because she is black. Also, she describes how racism she received from the people around her in this period.

3.4. Point of view

In his book entitled *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, Klarer has defined the term point of view as a "narrative perspective, characterizes how a text presents persons, events, and settings" (2004). *Zami* itself is an autobiography. Audre Lorde is the narrator as well as the main character of the book. The story in *Zami* is told from the first person narration, where we as readers see all actions throughout the book from Lorde's perspective. The first-person narration shows the action from participating characters who refer to themselves in the first person. For example, in *Zami*, the opening of the book refers to the first person narrator by the protagonist: "When I visited Grenada I saw the root of my mother's powers walking through the streets." This is a representation of the experiences and feelings of the narrator.

3.5. Theme

In a novel, short story, or other literary work, a literary theme is a major idea or underlying meaning that the author develops. In a story, the theme can

be expressed through the characters, plot, setting, or a combination of all of them. Themes are sometimes stated directly, sometimes implied. Without a theme, a story has no meaning or purpose. In his book entitled *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, Abrams and Harpham have defined theme as “sometimes used interchangeably with “motif,” but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to involve and make persuasive to the reader. “(2016).

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name is about self-representation, sisterhood, and power as a black woman. The theme of self-representation in the book shows that black women. sisterhood in *Zami* implies that women that share the same condition, in this book being black and lesbian, often form a strong relationship. The author describes she remains excluded in a lesbian village because she is black. "I remember what it was like to be young and black and gay and lonely. A lot of it was fine, felt I had the truth and the light and the key, but a lot of it was pure hell." (176). In *Zami*, the theme of power shows that women are the sources of her power. Lorde really appreciates the women in her life as a mother, a friend, or a lover. They were all a source of power to Lorde, who had helped her become herself. "Every woman I have ever loved has left her print upon me, where I loved some invaluable piece of myself apart from me, so different that I had to stretch and grow to recognize her. And in that growth, we came to separation, that place where work begins. Another meeting." (255).

In my opinion, the theme is really suitable for black women at that time. Lorde brings up the themes of self-representation, sisterhood, and power to show that black women can represent themselves and also do what they want.



CHAPTER IV

SELF-REPRESENTATION, SISTERHOOD, AND WOMEN'S POWER REPRESENTED IN AUDRE LORDE'S *ZAMI: A NEW SPELLING OF MY NAME*

This chapter discusses self-representation, sisterhood, and power of black women in Audre Lorde's *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. In this chapter. The writer explains self-representation, sisterhood, and power, which the author represents through Audre Lorde, the story's main character, and the author itself. This chapter is divided into three parts. To analyze self-representation, the writer only focuses on the main character of Audre Lorde. In discussing the second part, sisterhood, the writer centralizes on the relationship between Audre Lorde with Gennie and Felicia. Then, the last part is women's power and it is analyzed from three characters, they are Linda, Eudora, and Afrekete.

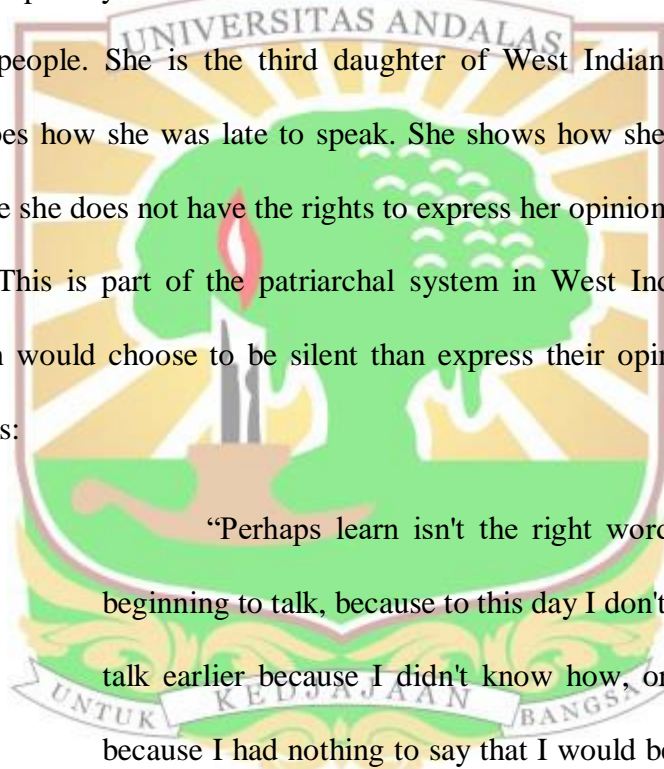
4.1 Self-representation in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

In this subchapter, the writer analyzes the self-representation experienced by Audre Lorde as the main character in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. The writer divides this subchapter into two points. First, the analysis will focus on Audre Lorde's self-representation through her experiences as a child, teenager, and adult black woman. Second, it will focus on self-representation and her intimate relationship as a lesbian. The writer focuses on these two points because these are the most dominant issues throughout the book.

4.1.1 Self-representation as Black Female

This part will discuss self-representation as black female character experienced by Audre Lorde, the central character in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. In my opinion, there are three stages presented by the author. It started when she was a child. The other stage is when she was a teenager. The most interesting is when she led her life as an adult.

Lorde is portrayed as a black woman who lives in the United States among white people. She is the third daughter of West Indian parents. Lorde describes how she was late to speak. She shows how she does not speak because she does not have the rights to express her opinion since she was a child. This is part of the patriarchal system in West Indian family that women would choose to be silent than express their opinions. As Lorde narrates:



“Perhaps learn isn't the right word to use for my beginning to talk, because to this day I don't know if I didn't talk earlier because I didn't know how, or if I didn't talk because I had nothing to say that I would be allowed to say without punishment. Self-preservation starts very early in West Indian families.” (21-22).

The author portrays Lorde as a child who does not have an idea about racism. She is confused about the reality that people discriminate against people based on skin color. The first time she and her sisters discuss race is about someone being colored. She does not know what is

colored means. Lorde asks Phyllis, her first sister and she replies, "Well, the nuns are white, and the Short-Neck Store-Man is white, and Father Mulvoy is white, and we're Colored." (58). Lorde describes her mother has a light skin for black people, so she is confused about whether her mother is white or colored. Her sister replies impatiently that she does not know. Lorde says that if anyone asks, she would say she is white like her mother. Her two sisters look at her with horror in their eyes and say she should never say that. Lorde does not understand why but never gets the answer from her sisters.

The author describes the discrimination Lorde experienced in school because her skin is black. She describes that she is not chosen as the class president because of her skin color. When she was in the sixth grade of elementary school, there was an election for class president. Lorde felt she was the smartest female student, and believed she would win the election. She was also sure her friends would also choose her. Lorde describes her mother got angry when she told her that she was running for the election. Her mother thinks that she just wasting time with such an unimportant thing. The writer claims her mother just does not want her to be disappointed because no one would choose her. The author shows how Lorde experiences racism when she was a child. No one chooses her because she is black. Lorde thinks that something is wrong and unfair and burst into tears.

Another example of racism is when Lorde and her family have a trip to Washington DC. They were not allowed to eat in railroad dining cars. Lorde said she wanted to eat in the dining car, but her mother said that the food there was expensive and we didn't know about the cleanliness. Her mother didn't tell her that black people were not allowed into railroad dining cars. As narrates: "...My mother never mentioned that Black people were not allowed into railroad dining cars headed south in 1947..." (68).

The author portrays that Lorde even cannot eat ice cream together with white people. This situation happens because white people do not want black people to sit and eat around them. Lorde also describes another discrimination that some hotels do not want to rent out the room to black. The reason she and her family went to Washington DC was that her sister Phyllis's class trip was to Washington, but her teacher returned her deposit and said that all her friends, who were white, would stay in a hotel that didn't rent out the room for blacks. Lorde describes how hard it is for a kid to understand racism. She feels unfair and angry, but her parents seemed to have expected this to happen, so they didn't talk about the injustice. As she narrates :

"American racism was a new and crushing reality that my parents had to deal with every day of their lives once they came to this country. They handled it as a private woe. My mother and father believed that they could best

protect their children from the realities of race in America and the fact of American racism by never giving them name, much less discussing their nature.” (69)

In this book, the author also describes the discrimination Lorde gets in her teenage life. Lorde describes her friends in high school do not want to invite her to their house because she is black. There is something wrong with her that formed an invisible barrier between her and her friends, who were white. They do not invite her to their house, parties, or summer homes for the weekend. She has no idea about racism and thought the trouble is with her. But, she knew something was missing because they visited each other.

The author describes Lorde who tries to be an independent woman by leaving her parent's house when she graduated from high school. She feels determined to explore a new chapter of her life. Lorde starting her journey to find what home, love, and freedom are. Lorde thanks her mother for what she has taught her so far, allowing her to survive. Lorde narrates her departure from home:

“When I moved out of my mother's house, shaky and determined, I began to fashion some different relationship to this country of our sojourn. I began to seek some more fruitful return than simple bitterness from this place of my mother's exile, whose streets I came to learn

better than my mother had ever learned them. But thanks to what she did know and could teach me, I survived them better than I could have imagined.” (104).

The readers of *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* can see how Lorde's mother has an important role influences Lorde as a black woman. Her mother teaches her how to survive as a black woman. Lorde describes she survived her new journey because of the things her mother taught her. Lorde portrays that she grew black as needed for life, affirmation, love, and sharing.

In my opinion, the three stages of Lorde's journey as a black woman are portrayed successfully by the author because it is represented Lorde's journey to understand self-representation as a black female. Lorde is a female character who is responsible for what she wants. She wants to find what home, love, and freedom are. She starts her journey to find the meaning of that. The amount of time and through her journey and experiences she finally finds out more about herself.

4.1.2 Self-representation and Intimate Relationships as Black Lesbian

In this part, the writer discusses the main character, Audre Lorde as a black lesbian. There are two types of relationships Lorde goes through the phase of her life, as a heterosexual and as homosexual, which is in this book as a lesbian. In this book, the author describes before Lorde come out as a lesbian, she was a heterosexual woman. She dated a white man named

Peter. She explains they have a good time together before he disappointed her. Lorde describes one day Peter said they should stop seeing each other, and Lorde agrees because she thinks it common thing to do in a relationship.

I argue that Lorde's disappointment about men's treatment toward her leads Lorde to be a woman who does not like men. Lorde describes that Peter invites her to meet again and ask for camping, Lorde is very excited about it, and she has prepared the necessary things for camping. However, the long wait for Peter never came. The bus they were supposed to be on had departed, and Peter still hadn't shown himself. That's when Lorde understood that Peter wasn't coming. After sitting at the station for a few more hours because she was too stunned and tired, Lorde finally left the station and involuntarily burst into tears. As she narrates :

“...and the tears rolled down my face as I made my way through the crowds and the slush. I could not quite believe this was all happening to me.” (107).

The author explains Lorde protects her feeling and herself from men after a man cannot respect her. Lorde explains that she didn't respond to Peter when he wanted to explain his fault. It was a form of self-defense because she didn't want to be hurt anymore. As Lorde narrates:

“He called me a few days later with an explanation and I hung up on him immediately, in self-protection. I

wanted to pretend he had never existed and that I had never been someone who could be treated so. I would never let anyone treat me like that again.” (107).

I argue that Lorde's self-defense is formed because she realizes that her white boyfriend cannot respect her as a black woman. Therefore, Lorde chooses to have a relationship with the same sex. As the narration:

“That summer, I decided that I was definitely going to have an affair with a woman-in just those words. How I was going to accomplish that, I had no idea, or even what I meant by an affair.” (119).

In this book, Lorde experiences homosexual relationships with black and white women. The writer divides the analysis into two stages, the first stage with black women and the second stage with white women. The author explains Lorde has a doubtful thoughts about her sexual desire. She is unsure whether she loves women or not. She meets Ginger, her co-worker at a factory in Stamford. She is the first black woman who has a romantic relationship with Lorde. Lorde describes there are indications of flirting and attention from Ginger. Ginger is portrayed as a woman of the world because she knows everything. She lives her life according to her principles. She is also a straightforward woman. Lorde explains that she is indirectly convinced that she is lesbian after Ginger asks her directly.

Lorde was still unsure and didn't know how to answer. Lorde narrates her anxiety as follows:

"I smiled up at her and said nothing. I certainly couldn't say I don't know. Actually, I was at a loss as to what to say. I could not bring myself to deny what I had just this past summer decided to embrace; besides, to say no would be to admit being one of the squares..." (135).

The above quote explains that Lorde is still unsure about her sexuality. She wants to admit that she is gay but she never experienced dating a woman before. Until Ginger convinces her, Lorde finally admits that she is lesbian and starts her relationship with Ginger. Lorde describes her relationship with Ginger as not being lovers, even though they slept together. the writer argues that Ginger is the type who doesn't like to be tied down in a relationship and likes freedom. Lorde chooses to draw the lines for her relationship with Ginger.

This book describes Afrekete or Kitty another black woman who became Lorde's partner. Lorde describes Kitty as pretty, bold, and sensual, and she teaches Lorde much about love. Also, she is the one who teaches Lorde what home is, not where it is. "...Afrekete taught me roots, new definitions of our women's bodies-definitions for which I had only been in training to learn before." (250).

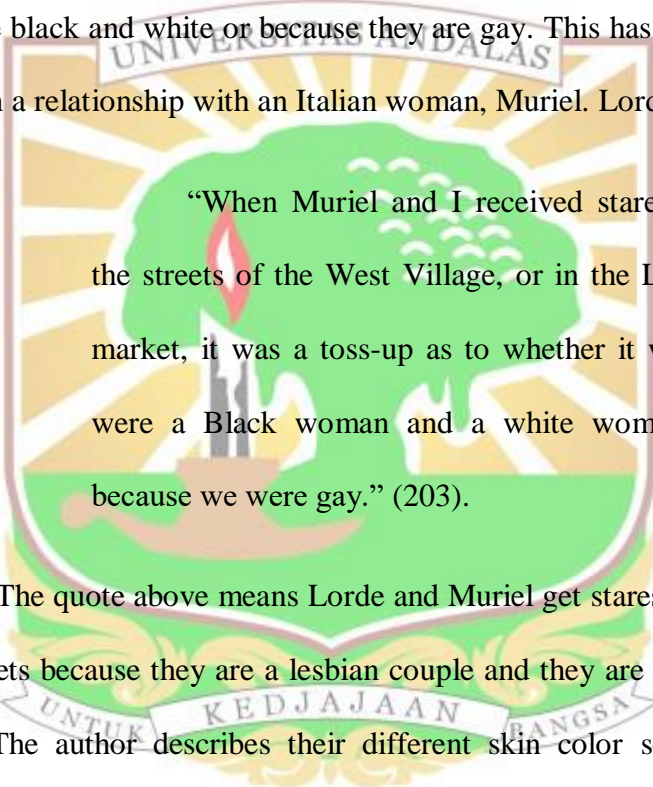
The author also describes that Lorde learns about loving women and roots from her lovers, one of them is Kitty. Lorde explains that Kitty and her are more familiar with each other because they are fellow black women. They spent much time at the bar where Kitty used to sing. Her relationship with Kitty is very important and meaningful because they often share stories about being a black woman. But in the end, Lorde and Kitty also parted because Kitty went to see her mother and daughter. “...Then we parted, passed, reformed, reshaping ourselves the better for the exchange. I never saw Afreketé again, but her print remains upon my life with the resonance and power of an emotional tattoo.” (253).

It is shown in this novel that Lorde also has a homosexual relationship with two white women, Eudora and Muriel. The author describes Lorde making moving to Mexico one of her dreams. In Mexico, Lorde feels accepted as a colored person. Lorde describes she learns many things about loving women after meeting with Eudora. “Eudora knew many things about loving women that I had not yet learned.” (169). Eudora is a mature woman who becomes a role model. Lorde explains that she was helped a lot by Eudora during her time in Mexico. The writer argues Eudora is someone Lorde can be comfortable with, and she respects her. They become close and establish a relationship.

The author describes that Lorde and Eudora have a good time when they are in a relationship. But Eudora still had unfinished business with her ex. She didn't want Lorde to get involved. That is why they decide to

break their relationship. I argue the reason why Lorde's relationship with her lovers ends is mostly because of her lover's problems. In Eudora's case, it is because of her unfinished problem with her ex-lover.

The author shows the different races become one of the struggles Lorde experienced as a black lesbian. She also gets discrimination even in the lesbian community. People often stare on the streets either because they are black and white or because they are gay. This has happened when she is in a relationship with an Italian woman, Muriel. Lorde narrates:



“When Muriel and I received stares and titters on the streets of the West Village, or in the Lower East Side market, it was a toss-up as to whether it was because we were a Black woman and a white woman together, or because we were gay.” (203).

The quote above means Lorde and Muriel get stares from people in the streets because they are a lesbian couple and they are from a different races. The author describes their different skin color sometimes made Lorde worried it would affect their relationship, driving her and Muriel apart. As Lorde narrates:

“..., afraid to examine the truths difference might lead me to, afraid they might carry Muriel and me away from each other. So I tried not to think of our racial differences too often. I sometimes pretended to agree with

Muriel, that the difference did not exist, that she and all gay girls were just as oppressed as any Black person, certainly as any Black woman."(204).

The author describes cheating as the reason why Lorde's relationship ends. Lorde's relationship with Muriel is over not because of their different race, but Muriel cheating on her. Lorde describes Muriel experiencing depression or psychiatric problems. Lorde states that Muriel started an affair with Lorde's high school friend. Lorde describes how she felt so angry and disappointed that she couldn't even swear. "When I got up, the house was quiet and empty. I could not even say, "How could you, you little bitch, with her of all people?" We couldn't even talk about it. Muriel wasn't there." (232).

It is shown that loyalty is what Lorde wants to represent in the relationship. She takes the relationship seriously. The reason why her relationship with her partner break always is because of her partner's problems. While Lorde herself is the one who is left behind. As she narrated:

"For me, this was the real thing, a step from which there was no turning back. I wasn't just playing around anymore, gay girl. I was living with a woman and we were lovers. I had done, quietly and easily, what I had longed and feared to do, I had made an irrevocable commitment.

Without conscious articulation of why, I knew together meant forever for me, even though there was no troth plighted, no wedding ceremony, no paper signed.” (201).

After analyzing self-representation as a black female and black lesbian, the writer concludes that Lorde successfully represents a black woman as a strong and self-assured person. She portrays how a little black girl who gets discrimination because she is black becomes a strong and determined woman who knows what she wants. In order to achieve that, she leaves her parents' house and starts a relationship with the woman. It means that her self-discovery is also achieved through her experiences as a black lesbian. Lorde also successfully ends the struggle of heterosexism for black women. She portrays that black women can have a relationship with whomever they want, men or women. At the end of the book, Lorde renames herself as *Zami*. “*Zami. A Carriacou name for women who work together as friends and lovers.*” (255).

The writer also claims that Lorde is more comfortable having a relationship with black women rather than white women. This is because of a black woman who convinces her about her sexuality. Also, Lorde learns many things about loving women, about home and roots, and also about herself when she is in a relationship with a black woman. On the other hand, Lorde's relationship with white women makes her insecure because society sees them with strange's gazes because of their different skin colors. Even in the lesbian community, Lorde still gets odd's stares

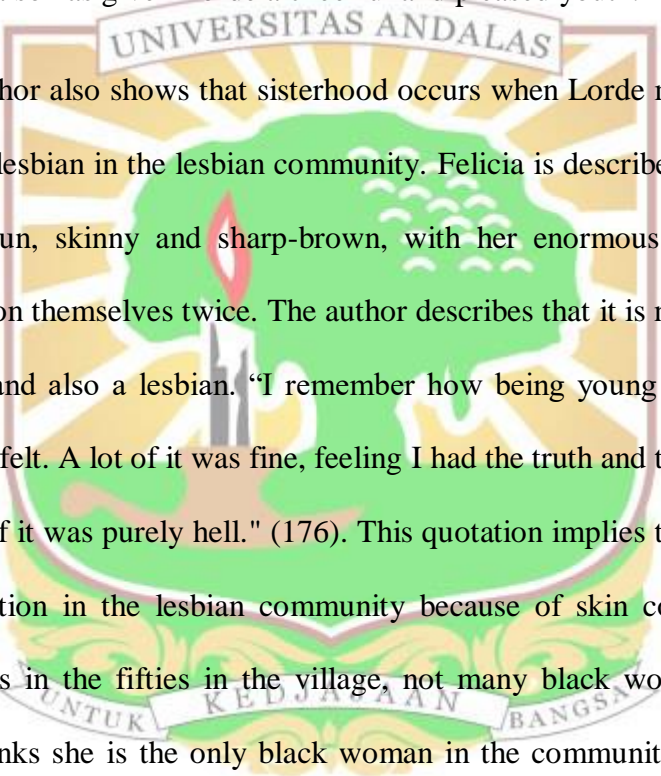
because the majority of lesbians are white women while she is on the minority side, black women.

4.2 Sisterhood in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

In this subchapter, the writer discusses sisterhood in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. The term sisterhood has many meanings. In its literal sense, it refers to the bond between sisters. More broadly, it now means a sense of closeness or connection between a group of women or between all women. The group may be united by shared hobbies, political or religious convictions, racial or socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or job. According to Bell Hooks in her book *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* states that “We can be sisters united by shared interests and beliefs, united in our appreciation for diversity, united our struggle to end sexist oppression, united in political solidarity.” (65).

In this research, the writer divides the analysis into two parts. First, sisterhood happens because of friendship and second, sisterhood happens because they shared the same sexual interest as lesbians. In this book, sisterhood occurs because of Lorde's friendship with a black woman in high school. Gennie is a new black student in Lorde's high school. Lorde describes meeting Gennie as being fun and exciting. They spend time together in the summer. Lorde visits Gennie's house and spends time attiring to each other. they also play and do some mischievous things like smoking and taking their mother's pennies. Lorde describes her friendship with Gennie is important to her. “Gennie was the first person in my life that I was ever conscious of loving. She was my first true friend.” (87).

Lorde as the author shows that the friendship of Lorde and Gennie leads to sisterhood because their friendship is represented so deep and meaningful. Gennie helps Lorde how to enjoy their youth. One of the reasons they become close is because they are black. Lorde describes she feels very sad and lost when Gennie died. Gennie is her best friend who she cherished and loved the most. In my opinion, Lorde is really grateful to Gennie because she becomes Lorde's closest friend and she also has given Lorde a cheerful and pleased youth.

The image is a watermark of the Universitas Andalas logo, which is a shield-shaped emblem. At the top, a banner reads "UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS". The central part of the shield features a green tree with a red flame-like shape at its top. Below the tree, there is a white banner with the text "UNTUK KEDJAJARAN BANGSA". The shield is set against a background of yellow and green rays.

The author also shows that sisterhood occurs when Lorde meets Felicia as a fellow black lesbian in the lesbian community. Felicia is described with the face of a spoiled nun, skinny and sharp-brown, with her enormous eyelashes that curled back upon themselves twice. The author describes that it is not easy being a black woman and also a lesbian. "I remember how being young and Black and gay and lonely felt. A lot of it was fine, feeling I had the truth and the light and the key, but a lot of it was purely hell." (176). This quotation implies there are racism and discrimination in the lesbian community because of skin color difference. Lorde describes in the fifties in the village, not many black women were gay. Lorde even thinks she is the only black woman in the community until she met Felicia. Lorde describes They became close in no time and declare that they were sisters. "We soon decided that we were really sisters, which was much more than friends or buddies..." (178). Lorde describes Felicia and her falling in love with each other, even though their physical relationship is just cuddling.

The author describes the sisterhood between Lorde and Felicia occurring because they are the minority, which is in this book black women. Lorde describes

joining a lesbian group, where the majority is white women making her relationship with Felicia closer. They care about each other. While not perfect, Lorde explains that they are trying to create a community where they can share mutual support. As Lorde narrates:

“Lesbians were probably the only black and white women in New York City in the fifties who were making any real attempt to communicate with each other; we learned lessons from each other, the values of which were not lessened by what we did not learn.” (179).

In brief, after analyzing sisterhood in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, the writer can conclude that sisterhood is represented through black and black relationships. It can be seen from the friendship of Lorde with Gennie and Lorde with Felicia. Sisterhood between Lorde and Gennie occurs when Gennie helps Lorde when she is struggling with racism in high school. Therefore, the sisterhood between Lorde and Felicia occurs when they are in the lesbian community as a minority, which is in this book as black lesbians.

4.3 Women’s Power in *Zami: A New Spelling of My name*

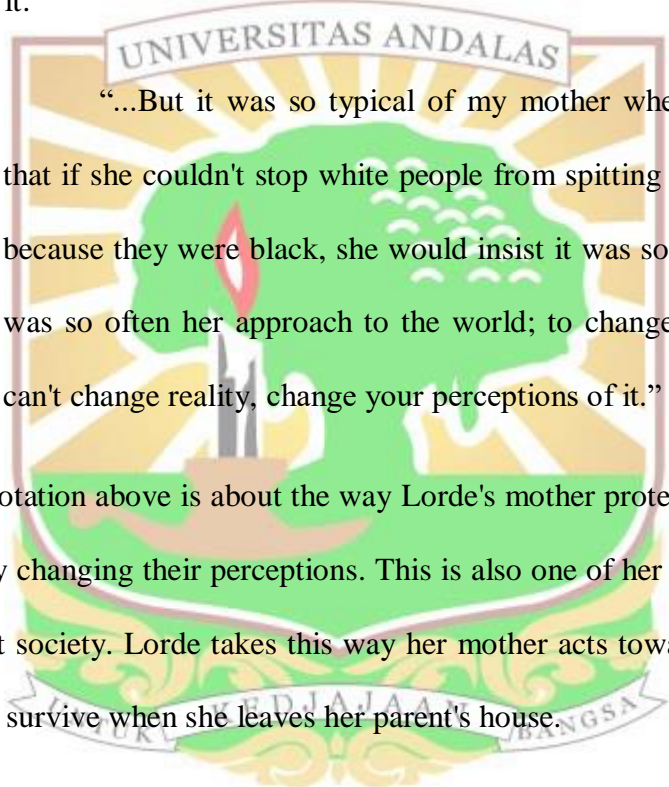
In the subchapter, the writer wants to explain power in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Power is often associated with men so it can lead to discrimination against women. Hillary M. Lips in her book *Women, Men, and Power* states that she views power as a crucial component of gender relations. Women have less access to most forms of power than men do, and as a result, the

majority of stereotypical male-female differences arise (1991). In this research, the writer discusses two types of powers from the book. First, the power against racist society, and second the power from the women as the source of strength.

The author portrays Lorde getting the power to against racist society from her mother. she always thinks her mother is a know-it-all. She describes her mother as a very powerful woman. At that time, the word " woman " and " powerful " were not common word combinations. His father and mother always discuss and make rules in their family. They will discuss it when they need something related to their child. "They shared decisions and the making of all policies, both in their business and in the family. Whenever anything had to be decided about any one of the three of us children, even about new coats, they would go into the bedroom and put their heads together for a little while." (15). Lorde considers her mother as a powerful woman because her mother is not only a passive wife, but she is also quite involved in making decisions in the household.

Lorde's mother, Linda is portrayed as a very private person and quite shy. She hides the fact that racism exists from her children to protect her children from racism. Lorde knows that there are things the mother hides from her children about her powerlessness. "I realize now, to hide from us as children the many instances of her powerlessness. Being Black and foreign and female in New York City in the twenties and thirties was not simple, particularly when she was quite light enough to pass for white, but her children weren't." (18).

The author shows that the way Lorde's mother protects her children from racism is by changing their perception. It is shown from the way Linda tells Lorde that people who spitting on them on the streets are lowkey people with no manners and sense because spit into the wind. Lorde didn't doubt her mother's words in the slightest. Lorde describes that is her mother's way; if she can't stop a white man from spitting on her child, then she will think of it as something else. Lorde narrates it:



“...But it was so typical of my mother when I was young that if she couldn't stop white people from spitting on her children because they were black, she would insist it was something else. It was so often her approach to the world; to change reality. If you can't change reality, change your perceptions of it.” (18).

The quotation above is about the way Lorde's mother protects her children from racism by changing their perceptions. This is also one of her mother's power against a racist society. Lorde takes this way her mother acts toward racism, that is why she can survive when she leaves her parent's house.

In this book, the author explains Lorde also gets the source of power from women she met along her journeys. They are Eudora and Afrekete. The author describes Lorde can survive in Mexico because of help from a woman. She is Eudora, one of the women she meets in Mexico who she admires and feels comfortable around her. Mexico is a place where Lorde feels welcome, a friendly stranger who smiles at each other when they pass. Lorde felt noticed and

welcomed. Lorde describes everywhere she goes, she sees a lot of brown people like her, and it excites her. She had never looked like this before. As she narrated:

“Wherever I went, there were brown faces of every hue meeting mine, and seeing my own color reflected upon the streets in such great numbers was a brand new and exciting affirmation for me. I had never felt visible before, nor even known I lacked it.”

(156).

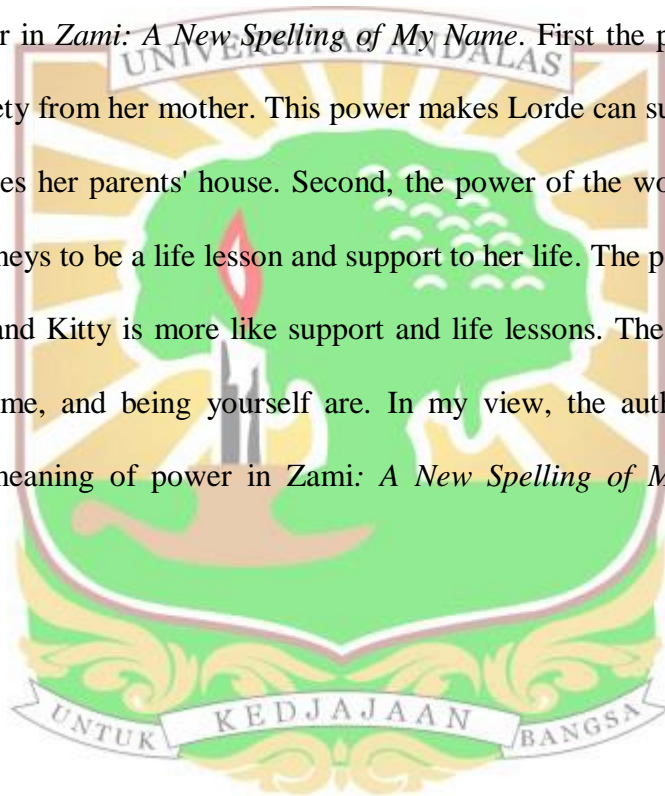
Eudora is portrayed as a woman that Lorde respects a lot. Lorde respects her because Eudora who makes her feel visible, teaches her about love and she thinks that Lorde is beautiful the way she is. Eudora also knows a lot about Mexico and helps Lorde in planning her trip while in Mexico. As Lorde narrates:

“It was in Mexico that I stopped feeling invisible. In the streets, the buses, the markets, the Plaza, and the particular attention within Eudora's eyes. Sometimes, half-smiling, she would scan my face without speaking. It made me feel like she was the first person who had ever looked at me, ever seen who I was. And not only did she see me, but she also loved me, and thought me beautiful. This was no accidental collision.” (173).

The author also describes another source of power Lorde gets from the woman is from Afrekete. Lorde portrays Afrekete or Kitty as one woman who teaches her about her roots, about what home is, not where it is. Lorde describes they often talk about what it means to love a woman. They share each other's

dreams. As fellow black women, they sometimes talk about how black woman struggles against discrimination. Lorde describes her brief encounter with Kitty left a deep impression. Lorde feels that Kitty has given her power that will certainly impact her life. “I never saw Afrekete again, but her print remains upon my life with the resonance and power of an emotional tattoo.” (253).

Finally, after analyzing the power in this book, I claim that there are two types of power in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. First the power to against the racist society from her mother. This power makes Lorde can survive in society when she leaves her parents' house. Second, the power of the women Lorde met along her journeys to be a life lesson and support to her life. The power Lorde gets from Eudora and Kitty is more like support and life lessons. The power to know what love, home, and being yourself are. In my view, the author successfully delivers the meaning of power in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* to the readers.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

After analyzing *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, the writer concludes that Lorde portrays the process of how Lorde becomes a black lesbian woman. I conclude that Lorde's implicity presents the readers with the self-representation, sisterhood, and power of black women through the main character of the book.

In this research, there are two types of self-representation, and the writer focuses on the two types that are most highlighted. There are self-representation as black female and self-representation as a lesbian. Self-representation is represented through the main character, Audre Lorde. Lorde vividly describes how a black woman goes through hard experiences since she was a child because of discrimination and racism. Moreover, Lorde shows the struggle of the main character as a black lesbian woman who lives in American racist society. This book interestingly illustrates the self-representation of the black woman as a strong and self-assured woman through the main character. Regarding self-representation as a black lesbian, the author displays the change in the main character's sexual desire blatantly. The author describes Lorde does not know how to express her sexuality, but she loves women since her earlier days. The researcher concludes that Lorde also shows black feminist and queer issues and

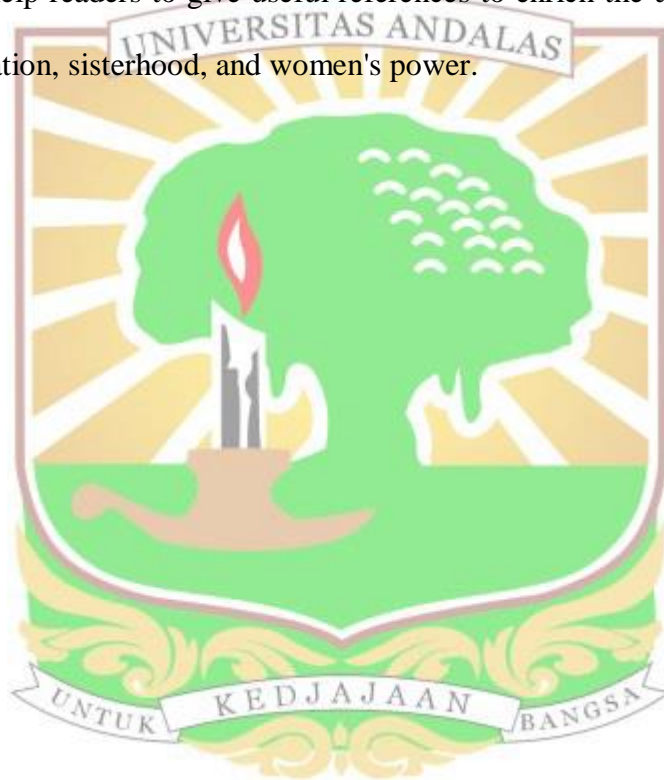
she fully supports them. Lorde also shows that lesbian women, especially black lesbians also have the same rights as humans in general.

The author represents two types of sisterhood as a result of friendship as fellow black women and black lesbians. Sisterhood with black women can be seen in Lorde's friendship with Gennie, her black friend in high school. Meanwhile, sisterhood with black lesbians can be seen through the relationship between Lorde and Felicia. The author also portrays that black lesbian women do not even feel comfortable in the lesbian village because most are white. Lorde explains that they are trying to create a community where they can share mutual support. Lorde wants to tell readers everywhere that as a black lesbian, she survived and there will be someone who understands us. The writer claims the author tries to represent sisterhood because black women can build their own community to support each other and fight against discrimination toward black women.

The writer believes that in this book, power is represented as a source of strength for the main character to support her in achieving her self-representation. This can be seen through the relationship between Lorde and her mother and her lovers, Eudora and Afrekete. The author explains that because of her mother she can survive in a racist society as a black. Also, Lorde shows that she learns so much about loving women and being herself from Eudora and Afrekete. The writer believes Lorde would remember all the women who become her source of strength and power and thank them. Also, the author tries to show the reader that we should not forget people that become our source of power.

5.2 Suggestion

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name by Audre Lorde is one of the interesting black women's autobiographies. Unfortunately, there is not much research about this book yet. The writer personally suggests that other researchers discuss self-portraits as a lesbian poet in the novel *Zami: A New Spelling of My name* because it is interesting to discuss. For the readers, the writer hopes this research can help readers to give useful references to enrich the understanding of self-representation, sisterhood, and women's power.



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