

Silenced, Yet Resisting: Women in *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal

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INTRODUCTION

- In Cameroon, women face forced marriage, sexual harassment, and domestic violence (Moussi, 2023).
- The culture of Cameroonian society can be described as highly *virile* (masculine), *phallocratic* (male-dominated), and *misogynistic* (Vincent 1979; Barbier 1985; Nyemb 2018). These forms of violence are widespread and alarming.
- They call for urgent social change.
- Literature can serve as a tool for resistance and awareness.
- *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal explores forced marriage, polygamy, and domestic abuse.
- The novel gives voice to women's suffering and resistance.
- It is a revised version of *Mounyal* and won the Prix Goncourt des Lycéens (2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Silencing of Women: Patriarchy, Tradition, and Culture
- Mechanisms of Oppression (Forced Marriage & Polygamy, Gendered Violence, Internalized Patience (Munyal)
- Resistance: Subversion and Agency (Narrative Voice: By giving voice to the inner thoughts of Ramla, Hindou, and Safira, Amal subverts the silence imposed on women, she transforms the personal into the political)
- Acts of Defiance
- Literature as Resistance
- Scholarly and Critical Reception
- Critics and analysts have praised the novel's polyphonic narrative style, ethnographic realism, and searing testimony.

METHOD

- The analytical process involves several key steps:
- Identification of central themes and recurring motifs, particularly those related to silence, resistance, and gendered experiences.
- Examination of narrative techniques, including narrative voice (first-person narration) and the psychological development of main characters (Ramla, Hindou, and Safira), to understand how subjectivity and agency are constructed.
- Contextual interpretation of the novel's socio-cultural background, focusing on how patriarchal norms and symbolic violence are portrayed within the Cameroonian setting.
- Cross-referencing with secondary literature and feminist theoretical frameworks, to situate the findings within broader scholarly discourse and to support critical interpretations.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

violence against women represented in *Les Impatientes*:

- Forced Marriage and Child Marriage
- Domestic Violence
- Polygamy and Wives' Rivalry
- Symbolic and Structural Violence

Voicing women's experiences and resistance:

- First-Person Narrative as a Space of Resistance
- Exposing Marginalized Female Realities
- Linguistic Symbolism and Repetition
- Social Critique of Virile and Phallocratic Culture

CONCLUSION

- The main characters **Ramla, Hindou, and Safira** represent three forms of oppression against women in Cameroon: forced marriage, domestic violence, and polygamy.
- **Munyal** (*patience*) is a recurring keyword in the novel, symbolizing the cultural pressure for women to endure and remain silent in their suffering.
- The title **Les Impatientes** implicitly signals resistance to *Munyal*: the female characters begin to question, reject, and fight back against the patriarchal system that oppresses them.
- Through a personal **first-person narrative** (*je*) and symbolic language, the novel becomes a tool of social critique against **virile** and **phallocratic** culture that institutionalizes misogyny.
- *Les Impatientes* not only gives voice to women's experiences but also opens space for awareness and potential social change.

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THANK YOU!