



Portrayal of Woman's Images in Jostein Gaarder's *Vita Brevis*

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Abstract

The term "*feminist*" has recently received a lot of attention. In fact, feminism has long been studied and has a strong connection to the image of woman. This study attempted to investigate the main female character in *Vita Brevis*. To do further research, the researchers used Culler's "*reading as a woman*" (1984) to analyze Floria Aemelia's imagery using a feminist literary criticism methodology. Women's protests against prejudice they experienced in the fields of education and literature are at the foundation of feminist literary critique. The findings of this investigation showed that Floria is a lady who suffered as a result of the way her ex-husband and his mother treated her. She was separated from her son as a result of her divorce from her ex-husband. After all of the hardships she had been through, this work showed that Floria is an intelligent, compassionate, analytical, and objective woman.

Keywords: Woman's Images, *Vita Brevis*

Introduction

Published by Phoenix House in 1997 in Great Britain, *Vita Brevis* was one of about thirteen novels Gaarder had ever written. Norwegian intellectual Gaarder is the author of numerous novels, short stories, and picture books. Gaarder frequently explores children's sense of curiosity about the world by writing from their point of view. His works are often incorporated into the category of young adult, but in fact, the theme in his novel is quite heavy and has a serious vibe for young readers. It is just the ability of storytelling and language that is appealing and in accordance with teenagers, the books can be easily understood, and can be enjoyed by anyone, including adults.

The story began when the main character of this novel, Floria Aemelia, is trying to reveal the truth that has not been known to the public about her relationship with Aurelius Augustine before he became a Bishop of Hippo. She tries to show potential, strong images as an independent, highly educated, passionate and compassionate woman. With that, the injustice that she experienced by the writings of Aurelius Augustine on his book "Confession" was uncovered.

For further investigation, the researchers applied a feminist literary criticism approach by using Culler "reading as a woman" (1984) to find out what kind of images that Floria Aemelia had. Feminist critics in literature is also known as a feminist literary criticism. Yoder (2007) mentions that feminist literary criticism does not mean female critics, or criticism of women, or criticism of female authors. The



simple meaning of feminist literary criticism is that critics view literature with special awareness, where there is a gender that has a lot to do with culture, literature and life. Feminism as a model of literary criticism assumes that the activity of women in literature is a concrete form of social consciousness. Literature on other aspects is also believed to be a practice that connotes directly with specific social awareness theories. Feminist literature is a movement of struggle against all forms of objectification of women. Women and men are also believed to have different social awareness as well as social control (Anwar, 2010).

Refer to feminist literary criticism, the theory arisen by Culler “reading as a woman” is the concept of a women reader leads to the assertion of continuity between women’s experience of social and familial structure and their experiences as a reader. When examining attitudes toward women or the representation of women in the works of an author, a genre, or a time period, criticism that is based on this premise of continuity is very interested in the circumstances and psychology of female characters. Culler even added, criticism based on the presumption of continuity between the reader’s experiences and a woman’s experience and on a concern with images of women is likely to become most firm as a critiques of the phallogocentric assumptions that rule a literary work (O’Hara & Culler, 1984). In tune with the theory of Culler, by looking at the feminist perspective and seeing the depictions of the reality of women in Jostein Gaarder’s *Vita Brevis* (1997) as a reflection of society, the image of women, in particular, was the reason the researchers chose the novel as a material object. To we extend knowledge, there has no issue raised before due to this literary work. Thus, this study wanted to find out the intrinsic elements and disclose the images of women depicted in the main female character related to self-images and social images in *Vita Brevis*.

Research Methodology

Design of the research is a very important factor in a research. The method used in this research was descriptive qualitative method. Aspers & Corte (2019) define qualitative research as an iterative process in which the scientific community gains a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied by making new significant distinctions. This formulation was created as a tool to aid in the improvement of research designs, while emphasizing the presence of a qualitative dimension in quantitative work as well. The source of data in this research were divided into two; primary and secondary data. Primary data in this research is *Vita Brevis* by Jostein Gaarder as a main object of this research. The secondary data of this research are all of the information that related to the primary data which are literary books, article, journal, internet and other references.

In this research, the researcher used Culler’s theory to find out the images of woman in Jostein Gaarder novel *Vita Brevis*. From the research findings, the researchers find three kinds of intrinsic elements based on facts of story and two types of images of woman used Floria’s character in Jostein Gaarder novel *Vita Brevis*.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Researchers found that the intrinsic elements of this novel consist facts of story, such as character and characterization, setting, plot and theme. Moreover, it was also found the images of women using two types of analysis, self-images and social images. Self- images are images and psychological images, while social images are the images of women in family and the images of women in society. Furthermore, researchers only focuses in the main female character to analyze the images of woman in *Vita Brevis*.



A. Intrinsic Elements

1. Character and Characterization

Floria Aemelia is a central or main female character in this novel. She appears as the protagonist who acts as a beloved one of Aurelius Augustine and a mother of Adeodatus.

We lived faithfully together for more than twelve years and had son together. (p. 13)

Floria Aemelia as a main character in this novel is depicted as a high educated woman. Clearly, she shows how highly educated her as a woman not only because she was a student of rhetoric and also taught rhetoric afterwards. Also, through her letter, she expressed her feelings, emotions and thoughts in her mind that has not appropriate with Aurelius Augustine confessions on his books.

Table 1. Floria's Character as an educated woman

<i>Now I pass as a learned woman who gives private lessons here in Carthage.</i> (p. 23)	Floria had completed her studies to become an educated person then taught rhetoric at Carthage.
<i>You must forgive me, your Grace, but I am a cultivated woman now.</i> (p. 129)	Floria is described very clearly that she is now an educated woman. In other words, Floria knows clearly what the meaning of the writings that Aurelius Augustine means in his book and makes clear the assumption that Augustine has given to himself that now he is a woman who is studied, a woman who clearly knows every word he says and denies himself. It is also an attempt Floria to try to understand Aurelius' mindset and the way Aurelius understands and interprets the things in his life as written in his book confession, As Floria always says in her letters that her biggest opponent is not other women but the thoughts of men themselves.

Floria is a very kind woman because she graciously accepts Monica and Augustine's bad treatment and attitude.

Table 2. Floria's Character as a kind-hearted woman

<i>But it was the two of you who sent me away, and for you it was not chiefly on account of the planned of the planned marriage, it was for another reason as well.</i> (p. 15)	Monica (Floria's ex mother in law) and Augustine (her ex-husband) that drove Floria away from even her child was a very painful fact for her, but Floria graciously accepted it all because she did not have the power to demand that from her ex-lover and her lover's mother.
<i>It was I who bore him, and it was I who fed him at my breast, for we had no wet nurse. Then I left him with you, you write. No mother does this willingly, she does not desert</i>	Floria with deep wounds and suffering must let her son go with his father and grandmother because Floria had nothing to be able to fight or keep his child by his side. That's also what Floria thinks is



her only son without suffering the most agonizing grief. But without you beside me I could make no demands, for I had no fortune. Wasn't that why Monica wanted to have you married to a girl of high standing? (p. 17)

the reason Monica separates them because Floria did not have anything, so Monica sets Augustine up with a woman who is equal to her.

Floria is a loyal woman. Floria was loyal to Augustine by being unrelated and married to other men even after Augustine left her to marry another woman.

Table 3. Floria's Character as a loyal woman

It is true that I made the promise not to know any other man. But I did not to make that promise to God. Wasn't it you who begged me to make "you" that promise? I am sure about this, for it was my only consolation when I travelled home alone to Milan. (p. 13)

Augustine asked Floria to promise not to marry another man. Floria herself that he would be loyal to only one person, Aurelius Augustine. And that's because Aurelius begged Floria to promise not to fall in love and get to know any other man.

In the novel *Vita Brevis*, Floria criticizes not only Augustine's attitude to herself but also Augustine's attitude as a bishop and the entire Christian church.

Table 4. Floria's character as a critical woman

*Was I nothing more than a woman's body to you? You know that isn't true. And how can you distinguish between **body and soul**? Isn't that **bungling God's work of creation**?* (p. 53)

Floria also opposes Augustine's view of their love which is only interpreted as lust and also Aurelius Augustinus' statement about self-control which Augustine always puts in his writings. According to Floria, what they went through together was not just lust, sexuality, or sensory feelings, but also a deep feeling of love. This also intersects with Augustine's thinking as a bishop, that all things related to the world of the senses are a sin for him which is indirectly also against God's creation

*I shiver, for I fear the day will come when women like me will be done away with by the men of the universal church. And why will be done away with, your Grace? Because they remind you that you have denied your own soul and gifts. And for whom? **For a God, you all say, for him who created a heaven above you and also an earth which actually hold women who bring you into the world.*** (p. 159)

Floria has a very deep fear of the decision of the universal church leaders in the future that women are only created and destined by God as creatures to be avoided and exiled like her.

2. Setting

Italy and Africa are the two places where the story of *Vita Brevis* by Jostein Gaarder is set. The beginning of the story begins in the continent of North Africa and then moves to Italy.



Table 5. Setting of Place

• Setting of Place			
1	Carthage	<p><i>As I mentioned, I was able to borrow your confessions from the priest here in Carthage. Forgive me now for copying out some sections that I shall comment on the further. I hope you have the patience to read my reflections with an open mind. Or my confessions if you like. (p. 29)</i></p>	<p>Carthage is also the place where Floria first read the book Confession by Augustine itself given by the Priest of Carthage. And that's where Floria started writing and commenting on all the things that Augustinus wrote in his book.</p>
		<p><i>Now I pass as a learned woman who gives private lessons here in Carthage. Don't you think that's quite amusing to think of, by the way – that now it is I who am the teacher of rhetoric? (p. 23)</i></p>	<p>Floria returned to Carthages and began her career there as a private teacher that teaching rhetoric.</p>
2	Fig Tree	<p><i>I remember I was sitting beneath a fig tree with three or four students. You already knew one of them and came walking towards us, so I squinted against the sun and looked up at you. (p. 45)</i></p>	<p>Their meeting began when Floria was sitting and discussing with other students under a fig tree. The meeting under the fig tree gave Floria an interesting impression which made her attracted to Aurelius and otherwise.</p>
			<p>Also, the fig tree is a special and specific place that build the relationship between Floria and Aurelius and the first place for the both of them were met and fall in love.</p>
3	Milan	<p><i>It was then you were appointed to the imperial post as tutor of eloquence in Milan. (p. 79)</i></p>	
		<p><i>In book eight you describe your own conversion in Milan, for after all you did find a kind of peace. You write: 'By then I was convinced of eternal life in you, even if I only saw it as through a glass darkly. But I had been released from all doubts about the existence of an imperishable being from whom all other beings originate'. (p. 115)</i></p>	<p>Milan is also a city that leaves a deep sorrow for Floria where Floria is separated by her child and lover. At that time, Monica came and put herself in their midst. Then she told Floria to leave Augustine and her baby Adeodatus.</p>
4	Rome	<p><i>I thought of that strange question you had put to me more than ten years</i></p>	<p>Ten years earlier, Floria had remembered Augustine's words when</p>



previously: have you been to Rome? I was so sure that what we were doing was right. If the two of us were to have a future we would somehow have to free ourselves from Monica together. (p. 75)

he asked if Floria had ever been to Rome until now it had become real and strange to her. Rome is also a place of escape for Augustine and Floria to start their lives without Monica's presence.

- **Setting of Time**

Vita Brevis is an old manuscript that revolves around the 16th century which later became the source or material and inspiration for Jostein Gaarder to rewrite it and make it a novel. Later, *Vita Brevis* is a lawsuit or criticism from Floria to Augustine. Through her book entitled *Confession*, it can be seen that the writing was written around the 4th century, so that the time setting of the story in the *Vita Brevis* novel considered the same.

- **Setting of Social Culture**

Socio-cultural settings are matters relating to the social behavior of the community in a place that is told in a work of fiction. Socio-cultural settings are matters relating to the social behavior of the community in a place that is told in a work of fiction

- (1) **Religion and Ideology.** In the *Vita Brevis* novel, the ideology or belief of the people depicted in the story is a society that adheres to *Manichees* and *Catholic Christianity*.
- (2) **Social Status.** Floria Aemelia as a woman who lived during the Roman Empire was a person who had a low economic condition or commonly called poor.

Now I follow you by saying I'm leaving out a great deal to get to what is essential to me more quickly. Besides, I have used half my fortune on parchment and haven't many sheets left to write on. (p. 129). Based on the previous statement, it shows how poor Floria is. Even to buy sheet after sheet of parchment to write his letter, she had already spent half of the wealth or money she had.

3. Plot

The storyline in *Vita Brevis* is fairly complicated to describe. The story of the novel refers to Augustine's work, *Confession*, where Augustine tells about his experiences and life journey as a Catholic. The experience and journey of his life towards God that Augustine conveys in his book repeatedly are what causes the contents of the *Vita Brevis* to be the same because Augustine's book entitled *Confession* is the source of writing and criticism for Floria. So, the researchers will sequentially determine each event, conflict and climax of the *Vita Brevis*.

Table 6. Plot of *Vita Brevis*

Events	<i>In book three you write of the time you came to Carthage as a young student: 'a vicious erotic life boiled around me on all sides, exactly like a witches' cauldron I was not yet in love, but I longed for love. I kept desires hidden</i>	The first meeting between Floria and Augustine himself. The meeting when they were both students at the school of rhetoric in Carthage. The first meeting between Floria and Augustine made a deep impression on both of them.
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	<p><i>and felt irritated with myself because I had so little craving. Out of the need for love I searched for something I could love.</i> (p. 45)</p>	
	<p><i>As I mentioned, I was able to borrow your confessions from the priest here in Carthage. Forgive me now for copying out some sections that I shall comment on further.</i> (p. 29)</p>	<p>It shows the second causal relationship, namely when the priest of Carthage gave Floria Augustine's book entitled <i>Confession</i> for her to read. Since then, Floria's writing began which became the content of the novel of <i>Vita Brevis</i> itself</p>
	<p><i>As we both know, I wasn't torn away from you because Monica had found a suitable girl. Naturally that was Monica's reasoning, she was thinking of the future of the family.</i> (p. 15)</p>	<p>The conflict began when Floria and Augustine were separated. Monika became the beginning of Floria and Agustinus' separation where Monika wanted Agustinus to marry a woman who was equal in terms of economy or others. Meanwhile, Floria was the opposite woman.</p>
<p>Conflict</p>	<p><i>But it was the two of you who sent me away, and for you it was not chiefly on account of the planned marriage, it was for another reason as well. You thought I bound you to the world of the senses so you had no peace and quite in which to concentrate on the salvation of your soul.</i> (p. 15)</p>	<p>Floria thought that the thing that separated them was not only Monika who wanted Augustine to get a more worthy companion. But because of Augustine's own desire to get rid of Floria from his life because Floria became an obstacle for him to save his soul.</p>
	<p><i>But isn't it precisely an intensified form of infidelity to desert one's beloved for the sake of saving one's own soul? Wouldn't it be easier for woman to bear if the man left her because he wanted to marry – or because he preferred another woman, for that matter? But there was no other woman in your life, you merely loved your own soul more than me. Your own soul, Aurel, that was what you wanted to save, that which once had found rest in me.</i> (p. 17)</p>	
<p>Climax</p>	<p><i>It is not merely to shield you that I keep this brief. One afternoon you turned to me in a sudden rage, it was after we had shared the gifts of Venus again. Then you hit me. Do you remember how you hit me? You, Aurel, you who were once a respected teacher of rhetoric, you</i></p>	<p>The climax of the story between Floria and Augustine is when a bishop Hippo Aurelius Agustinus with his hand beats Floria, the woman he used to love. The woman who has been with him for 12 years and the mother of his own only child.</p>



beat me almost senseless because you had allowed yourself to be tempted by my tenderness. So it was I who had to bear the blame for your lust. (p. 141)

You hit me and screamed, Bishop, because now I posed a threat again to salvation of your soul. Then you seized a thick and beat me again. I wondered if you might want to beat the lift out of me, for that might certainly serve the same purpose as if you had castrated broken, so dissapointed and so ashamed of my Aurel that I clearly and distinctly remember wishing that you would do away with me now and for all. (p. 141)

In order to vent his guilt, Augustine bravely and cruelly beats Floria, who is none other than the lover and mother of his child.

*You folded your hands and begged, now me, now your God, for pardon. **You found some cloth and bound up my wounds. I myself was merely cold and frightened, cold because I was still bleeding, and frightened beacuse I had seen right into a kind of wickedness I had no inkling of. (p.141-143)***

Based on the statement, it shows that with cold feelings and fear and disbelief Floria realized that she had found another side, the cruel and evil side of her lover Augustine. An incident that he would never forget and never expected that it happened by the person he loved so much.

B. The Images of Woman in in *Vita Brevis*

1. Self-Images

- **Physical Aspect**

The image of a woman cannot be separated from her physical aspect. The physical aspect of a human being is characterized by changes in body shape from children to adults and then old age. Specifically, the physical aspects of a man are certainly different from the physical aspects of women. The physical aspect of a woman is marked by several physical changes in her life such as puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause.

The physical aspect of Floria as the main female character in the *Vita Brevis* novel is described as a mother who has gone through experiences in menstruation, pregnancy, and childbirth. Before becoming a mother, Floria must have gone through puberty where she fell in love to the man she loved.

Table 7. Floria's Physical Aspects

<i>It almost felt as if we two had lived a life together already. I knew at once that I could come to love you with heart and soul. Yet I could neither have feared nor dreamed that it would happen that same night, although if I</i>	Floria had fallen in love with all her heart and soul for Augustine, that the meeting felt like they had lived together for a long time and she never thought that all these beautiful things happened overnight. The meeting that lasted
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<i>had surmised it I might perhaps have done both at the same time. (p. 45)</i>	for 12 years without them knowing. Until finally they were blessed with a child and named him Adeodatus.
<i>Then there was our son, and as God is my witness: I was as much mother of Adeodatus as you were his blood father. It was I who bore him, and it was I who fed him at my breast, for we had no wet nurse. (p. 17)</i>	Floria is a mother to Adeodatus, where Floria has gone through the phase of giving birth and breastfeeding.

In addition to physical changes, the depiction of physical form cannot be separated from the self-image of women themselves. In the *Vita Brevis* novel, the description of Floria's physical form is only described once.

<i>Life, that is, although here, true enough, you call life death, and it is you who do this, you who once bent over me to smell my hair when we had walked over the River Arno together. (pp. 89-91)</i>	Floria has a shorter body than Augustine because when Augustine wants to smell Floria's hair, he bends down to be able to smell her hair.
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- **Psychological Aspects**

The physical aspect cannot be separated from the psychological aspect of a character. These physical changes form changes in the character's mindset and behavior. The psychological mage depicted by Floria as the main character is a woman who is smart, critical, and loyal as it is mentioned in characterization section above.

2. Social Images

- **The Images of Woman in Family**

The image of Floria in the family as seen in the *Vita Brevis* novel is described as a woman who lives her life as a lover but has a child from a relationship with her lover, Aurelius Augustine and the child is named Adeodatus. The relationship ended when Augustine's mother came and separated Floria from her lover and child, although in fact it was also a consideration for Augustine himself. At that time, Adeodatus was only 12 years old and Augustine took custody of their children because as a woman who did not have any wealth, Floria was unable to claim custody of her child, until Adeodatus was 16 years old and later died. This does not eliminate Floria's status or role as a mother, namely giving birth, breastfeeding and raising Adeodatus.

Table 8. *The Images of Woman in Family*

<i>Then there was our son, and as God is my witness: I was as much mother of Adeodatus and as you were his blood father. It was I who bored him, and it was I who fed him at my breast, for we had no wet nurse (p. 17)</i>	Floria is the biological mother of Adeodatus where she has given birth and has breastfed him without the help of a nurse. This illustrates Floria's role as a mother who has given birth to and takes care of her child.
<i>Then I left him with you, you write. No mother</i>	After the incident where Monica separated



does this willingly, she does not desert her only son without suffering the most agonising grief. But without you beside me I could make no demands, for I had no fortune. (p. 17)

him and Augustine at the same time he was separated from his son. Parting with her child is a very torturous thing for Floria but because of her helplessness and she does not have any wealth to demand she can only give up parting with her child.

• The Images of Woman in Society

Besides the image of women in the family, the image of women in society is also depicted in the *Vita Brevis* novel. The image is depicted through the view of the environment or society towards Floria as an individual or member of the community who socializes in it. Women have many roles that are inherent in their lives, their role in the social world has many aspects that cannot be limited because each role has its own differences. The role of women shown in this study is women as lover, worker and women as members of society, according to the description contained in the *Vita Brevis* novel.

Table 9. The Images of Woman in Society

<p><i>We live faithfully together for more than twelve years and had a son together. Quite often it happened that people we met took us to be man and wife according to the law. And you liked that, Aurel, I think it made you little proud, for many men are ashamed of their wives. (p. 13)</i></p>	<p>People's views on the relationship of Floria and Augustine who thought that they were a legal husband and wife couple. This shows how strong the bond between them is and how beautiful the relationship is seen by the general public to be mistaken for husband and wife</p>
<p><i>Now I pass as a learned woman who gives private lessons here in Carthage. (p.23)</i></p>	<p>Floria's role in society as a teacher who gives private lessons in Carthage after she graduated and becomes an educated woman.</p>
<p><i>I write because the priest of Carthage has allowed me to read your confessions. He thought your books might be edifying reading for woman like me. As a catechumen I've belonged in a way to the congregation here for many years already, but I shall not allow myself to be baptized, Aurel. (p. 11)</i></p>	<p>Floria's role as a member of the community in religious activities namely being a Catechumen or a new Christian congregation, but Floria has no desire to be baptized because she has her own views on baptism.</p>

Discussion

Literary work is a medium through which the author can express ideas, ideas, and feelings about the meaning and nature of life, whether experienced and witnessed by the author himself or heard through the stories of others (Suhendra et al., 2021). Meanwhile, literary works of writing include novels, poetry, and play scripts. Novels are literary works that are known to be true to life. The novel is a type of prose composition found in modern literature. Novel as a work of fiction offers a world that contains an idealized model of life, an imaginative world that is built through various intrinsic elements such as events, plots, characters and characterizations, settings, points of view, and so on, all of which are also



imaginative.

To find out the images of women in Jostein Gaarder novel *Vita Brevis*, the researchers applied Culler's theory (1984). From the findings above, there were three kinds of intrinsic elements based on facts of story and two types of images of woman used Floria's character in Jostein Gaarder's *Vita Brevis*. Researchers focused to describe Floria as the main character. Floria is a main female character that has a role as an ex-lover of Aurelius Augustine and a mother of Adeodatus and her characterizations are an educated woman, kind, loyal, detachment, and critical.

Some studies have been investigated image of women in novel (Fitriana et al., 2019; Kristin et al., 2021; Suhendra et al., 2021). Kristin et al (2021) applied mimetic approach and found that Elizabeth Gilbert's character perfectly embodies the modern woman image. The discussion concludes that Elizabeth Gilbert's image as a modern woman is as follows: independent woman, educated woman, strong woman, and thoughtful woman. Those mentioned are the characteristics of modern woman image, which are vastly different from traditional woman image. Meanwhile, Fitriana et al (2019) conducted research on Elizabeth Gilbert's image as a modern woman can be defined as an independent woman, an educated woman, a strong woman, and a thoughtful woman. Those mentioned are the characteristics of modern woman image, which are vastly different from traditional woman image. Freedom to act with Marni's bravery against her society's rules regarding the view that women cannot be porters is a form of desire that is not bound to the family or customs that they understand. Marni wishes to live independently in order to correct the situation in which her actions are categorized as those of a modern woman.

Conclusion

Floria, the main female character in *Vita Brevis*, is a good, loyal, educated woman with strong and critical opinions. Furthermore, the setting is divided into three categories: place, time, and sociocultural. The novel *Vita Brevis* takes place in two locations: North Africa and Italy. The novel's time and social setting are the Roman Empire from the 4th to the 5th centuries. Furthermore, the plot of the *Vita Brevis* novel is a backward plot in which Floria and Augustine went through their lives together until they eventually separated. The plots in this novel are divided into three parts: events, conflict, and climax.

The images of women in *Vita Brevis* are divided into two categories: self-image and social image. Self-image and social image are further subdivided, with self-image divided into physical and psychological aspects and social image divided into family and societal images. Floria's physical self-image is described as an adult and young woman with a child. Meanwhile, Floria's psychic self-image is described as a smart, critical, loyal, and opinionated woman. Floria's social image in the family is also described as a woman who lives a husband and wife life outside of marriage and has children from that relationship, so Floria lives it as a mother. Meanwhile, Floria's social image in society is described as a social being who also interacts with other people and women who work within the community.

The researchers expect that readers will find it simple to understand further facets of feminist literary criticism and that others would investigate images of women in various contexts, such as examining images of women in a particular century or time period. The reader is also advised to read this book if they intend to conduct future research on psychoanalysis, particularly the Oedipus complex. The primary character in this book, Floria, used the Greek myth of Oedipus to explain the bond between Augustine and his mother Monica.

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