

## **Portrayal of Ambivalent Sexism in Lloyd Fernando's *Green is the Colour***

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper seeks to investigate the concept of ambivalent sexism by highlighting different sub-components of sexism and analyse the nature of gender inequality as portrayed by the male characters and its consequences towards the protagonist named, Siti Sara in Lloyd Fernando's *Green is the Colour*. Ambivalent sexism is a theoretical concept developed by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske (1997). Ambivalent sexism aims to study and understand the nature of sexism and under this concept; sexism is divided into two sub-categories; hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. Both elements of sexism reinforce traditional gender roles and preserve patriarchal social structures. Hostile sexism is an antagonist attitude toward women, in the form of domination, degradation and hostility while benevolent sexism is a chivalrous attitude toward women that feels favourable but is actually sexist because it casts women as weak creatures in need of men's protection. Two characters in *Green is the Colour* represent the authoritative figures in Siti Sara's life and they are not holding back in asserting their dominance. Siti Sara's husband, Omar and Panglima, the Political Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs, portray certain behaviours which related with "dominative paternalism and heterosexual hostility". According to Glick and Fiske (1997), dominative paternalism suggests that men should control women while heterosexual hostility views women as sexual objects and fears the power that women can gain through sexual attraction. Benevolent sexism is best portrayed through Yun Ming. Yun Ming is stereotyping Siti Sara as exotic, submissive, vulnerable and docile thus she is more appealing to him and needs to be protected. Benevolent sexism may seem harmless, noble or even "romantic" but because it is an ideology that supports gender inequality and its foundations lie in traditional stereotyping as well as masculine dominance, thus the consequences are often damaging.

*Keywords: Ambivalent Sexism, Hostile Sexism, Benevolent Sexism, Patriarchal Social Structures*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Lloyd Fernando's *Green is the Colour* was written in 1993 and is meant to reflect the wake of the racial riots occurred in Malaysia on May 13, 1969. Post-May 13, Malaysia is a tense nation and all its insecurities and fears are portrayed through the thoughts and behaviour of the main characters: Siti Sara, a Malay sociology professor, Yun Ming, a Chinese civil servant, Dahlan, a Malay lawyer and activist, and Gita, an Indian who is Siti Sara's friend and colleague, as well as the dreadful personas like Panglima and Omar, Siti Sara's misguided husband.

The causes of the rioting of May 13 can be investigated to have similar roots. This event in particular originated from bitter clashes of opinions among various political parties

prior to polling day on 10 May that same year, where party leaders used racial and religious sentiments as fuel in order to win support.

Many people in Kuala Lumpur were caught in the racial violence and dozens upon dozens were injured and many were killed. Due to ethnic imbalance and the dissatisfaction of the races regarding their rights as citizens May 13 resulted in one of the most colossal damages Malaysia has ever experienced. The roots of this riot, clearly racial in nature had resulted in major repercussions, which are remembered to this day. According to police figures, 196 people died and 149 were wounded. 753 cases of arson were logged and 211 vehicles were destroyed or severely damaged. Few other interpretations of the casualties were concluded which figures even multiplied the original number (Aniz Alana, 2012).

While the wake of 13 May racial riots becomes the central theme in *Green is the Colour*, this paper seeks to investigate the issues on gender inequality by focusing on three male characters' treatments towards the protagonist. Yun Ming's, Omar's and Panglima's thoughts as well as behaviours display the features available under ambivalent sexism. Yun Ming is representing benevolent sexism while Omar and Panglima are evidently presenting the features under hostile sexism behaviours.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Before further discussion on gender inequality takes place, it is wise to consider the issue on feminism because the existence of this movement is to understand the nature of gender inequality. Feminism is a form of collective movements that aim to define, establish and defend the equal political, economic and social rights as well as equal opportunities for women. The major concern of these collective movements is in dealing specifically with the problem women face in overcoming social barriers. Apart from this issue, feminism is also concerned in liberation of both men and women from traditional cultural roles (Kolmar and Bartowski, 2005). Feminist theory is developed from these feminist movements and it aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and lived experience.

The history of feminism is divided into three phases which are known as waves. The first waves mainly focusing on women's suffrage movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries where the main concern is with women's right to vote. The second wave refers to a period of feminist activity in the early 1960s until the late 1980s. This period focuses on the liberation of women and their fight to gain legal and social equality. The third wave represents the continuation and the reaction on the failure of the second-wave feminist movements (Kolmar and Bartowski, 2005).

The theory that is being highlighted for this paper is feminist theory. As stated earlier, feminist theory is the extension of feminism. It is designed to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and feminist politics in a variety of fields, such as sociology, communication, economics, literary criticism and philosophy. Feminist theory is not only focusing on social relations but also focuses on analysing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests and issues (Kolmar and Bartowski, 2005).

Gender inequality refers to the obvious or hidden disparity between individuals due to gender. According to Hurst (2007), gender is constructed in two ways. The first is through social interactions and the second is through chromosomes, brain structure and hormonal differences. In his book entitled *Social Inequality*, Hurst describes one of the main reasons behind gender inequality is sexism. Sexism is a term coined in the mid-20th century. Hurst defines sexism as "the belief or attitude that one sex is inherently superior to, more competent than or more valuable than the other" (Hurst, 2007). Hurst elaborates that sexism usually

involves hatred and prejudice toward the other sex. It also refers to the application of stereotypes of masculinity in relation to men where it is also known as male chauvinism.

Peter Glick, Professor of Psychology at Lawrence University in Appleton and Susan Fiske, a Professor of Psychology at Princeton University explained further on the issue of sexism and developed a theoretical concept called ambivalent sexism, in order to study and understand the nature of gender inequality. According to them ambivalent sexism has two subcategories: hostile sexism and benevolent sexism.

Glick and Fiske clarify that ambivalent sexism highlights on the reconceptualization of the traditional view of sexism by including benevolent and hostile feelings toward women. Benevolent and hostile sexism both reinforce traditional gender roles and preserve patriarchal social structures. They share the common assumption that women are the weaker sex; however the two forms of sexism differ in their expression. Benevolent sexism is defined as subjectively positive attitudes and protection, idealization and affection towards women in traditional roles, while hostile sexism is defined as their negative equivalents of domination, degradation and hostility (Glick and Fiske, 2001).

Hostile sexism is common because it is a familiar form of traditional sexism such as offensive jokes, discrimination and harassment. It relates to classic characterizations of prejudice as antipathy and reflects the hostile derogation of women who pose a threat to the gender hierarchy (Connor, Fiske and Glick, 2016). In contrast, benevolent sexism takes on a more subtle form such as finishing a team work assignment alone based on the implicit assumption that a woman is not capable of completing the task on her own. Even though he may not be conscious of this subtle and perhaps unintended message, his actions suggest that she is inferior.

Benevolent sexism is “a set of interrelated attitudes toward women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that are subjectively positive in feeling (for the perceiver)” (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Benevolent sexism bestows affection on women who embrace limited but traditional gender roles (e.g., housewives). Hence, although benevolent sexism may appear positive, it presumes and reinforces women’s subordinate status (Connor, Fiske and Glick, 2016). In previous time only hostile sexism was considered relevant, however recently a strong stream of research has been conducted to show the damaging effects of benevolent sexism toward the individual as well as the community (Glick and Fiske, 2001).

## **METHODOLOGY**

Textual analysis is the research methodology selected for this paper. This variety of analysis is the method researchers use to describe and interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message. The purpose of textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts. Content analysis is one of the approaches under textual analysis where the occurrence of specific messages embedded in texts are analysed (Frey, Botan and Kreps , 1999).

Lloyd Fernando’s *Green is the Colour* which published in 1993 is the text chosen to interpret a theoretical concept called ambivalent sexism introduced by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske. According to Glick and Fiske, ambivalent sexism has two subcategories: hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. Glick and Fiske clarify that ambivalent sexism highlights on the reconceptualization of the traditional view of sexism by including benevolent and hostile feelings toward women. Benevolent and hostile sexism both reinforce traditional gender roles and preserve patriarchal social structures. This concept was developed to understand the nature of gender inequality (Glick and Fiske, 2001).

Glick and Fiske define benevolent sexism as a set of interrelated attitudes toward women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that are subjectively positive in feelings for the perceiver and also tend to elicit behaviours typically categorized as prosocial or intimacy seeking (Glick and Fiske, 1996). In the novel, Yun Ming who is having an affair with Siti Sara, displays such characteristics of benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism on the other hand is a familiar form of traditional sexism such as offensive jokes, discrimination and harassment which are blatantly displayed by Omar and Panglima.

This paper emphasizes the portrayal of ambivalent sexism by connecting this theoretical concept with the three characters in order to analyse the issues of gender inequality that appears in this novel.

## **AMBIVALENT SEXISM**

### **Benevolent and Hostile Sexism**

Historically and cross-culturally, men have held more resources, power, and status than women thus making gender-based inequality as universal. Despite general trends toward gender equality, male dominance remains a global reality. As of 2014, the global gender gap in economic participation and opportunity, which includes gender gaps in income, labor force participation, and professional advancement, stood at 60% (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, and Zahidi, 2014).

Sexism has typically been theorised as a reflection of hostility toward women. This view neglects a significant aspect of sexism: the subjectively positive feelings toward women that often go hand in hand with sexist antagonism. Sexism is viewed as a multidimensional construct that encompasses two sets of sexist attitudes: hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism is the classic definition of prejudice. Both hostile and benevolent sexism revolve around issues of social power, gender identity, and sexuality. Glick and Fiske do not perceive benevolent sexism as reassuring in nature, despite the positive feelings it may indicate for the perceiver, its foundations lie in traditional stereotyping and masculine dominance and its consequences are often damaging.

Glick and Fiske clarify that ambivalent sexism highlights on the reconceptualization of the traditional view of sexism by including benevolent and hostile feelings toward women. Benevolent and hostile sexism both reinforce traditional gender roles and preserve patriarchal social structures. They share the common assumption that women are the weaker sex; however the two forms of sexism differ in their expressions.

Ambivalent sexism emerges from the convergence of patriarchy, gender role differentiation, and female-male interdependence (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Each of these elements is associated with a set of hostile and benevolent attitudes toward women that legitimize male dominance. Social role theory posits that physical strength differences between men and women, in tandem with certain societal and ecological conditions, historically determined the distribution of men and women into social roles (Eagly and Wood, 2012). These factors lead to men performing roles that granted them greater decision-making power, authority, access to resources and setting the stage for patriarchy.

Benevolent sexism is defined as subjectively positive attitudes and protection, idealization and affection towards women in traditional roles, while hostile sexism is defined as their negative equivalents of domination, degradation and hostility (Glick and Fiske, 2001). Benevolent sexism may seem harmless, noble, or even "romantic," but its effects can be devastating. Benevolent sexism, like hostile sexism, is an ideology that supports gender inequality, and in some ways benevolent sexism can be even more insidious.

Hostile sexism is common as it is a familiar form of traditional sexism such as offensive jokes, discrimination and harassment. In contrast, benevolent sexism takes on a more subtle form such as finishing a team work assignment alone based on the implicit assumption that a woman is not capable of completing the task by herself. Even though he may not be conscious of this subtle and perhaps unintended message, his actions suggest that she is inferior. In previous time only hostile sexism was considered relevant, however recently a strong stream of research has been conducted to show the damaging effects of benevolent sexism toward the individual as well as the community (Glick and Fiske, 2001).

### **Benevolent Sexism**

In *Green is the Colour*, the portrayal of benevolent sexism is best demonstrated by Yun Ming, Siti Sara's paramour. Yun Ming is a civil servant working for the Ministry of Unity who seeks justice by working from within the government. He met Siti Sara for the first time during a dinner party attended by other civil servants and he was enchanted by her since. The main aspect of benevolent sexism is subjectively positive attitudes and protection, idealization and affection towards women in traditional roles (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Yun Ming's relationship with his wife is getting worse after the 13 May racial riots because she started to notice on the different ways of Yun Ming's colleagues' interaction with him. She believes that they started to perceive Yun Ming's position as lower than them because of his race. Her cold indifferent causes him to be trapped in loveless marriage and when his wife discovered his affair with a cocktail lounge hostess, she insisted to return home to England and brought their son with her.

Yun Ming was devastated in losing his son Chye to his wife. Apart from that, the working environment had changed among his colleagues. Post 13 May, the racial riots enclose everyone with suspicion and fear. In the middle of these personal turmoils, Yun Ming is looking for escapism and he finds it in Siti Sara. While Yun Ming "was surprised how easily he lost desire" for Phyllis, his wife, he was charmed with Siti Sara's exceptional beauty.

"The eyes were large with curling lashes, the lips full and sensuous, her complexion, though she nor no longer stood near pillar, still golden...There was no shadow in her face, her eyes were wide open now like a child's and looked at him frankly, and her words flowed in a running stream. For a moment Yun Ming felt they were enclosed in the real world from which the shadow world had been excluded". (p.8)

The excerpt above highlights Yun Ming's perception on Siti Sara; from her sensuous physical characteristics to her childlike wonder make her beyond appealing. However, as their interaction continues, Yun Ming feels a little disappointed with Siti Sara's innocent view on the effects of racial unrest. Yun Ming is angry with Dahlan, one of their mutual friends because he "stood on the steps of St. Peter's Church in Malacca and made some remarks about religious intolerance" (p.14).

"He felt vaguely dissatisfied. She did not understand the urgency. Then again, may be she didn't mean to be skeptical, may be it just a manner picked up from her university overseas. Even when she was talking seriously the manner could not dampen her beguiling impulsiveness". (p.14)

Yun Ming's assumption about Siti Sara's ignorance on the issues of racial unrest is one example of his portrayal of benevolent sexism. Benevolent sexism romanticizes heterosexual relationships and regards women as the perfect complement to men, but also depicts women as weak and in need of male protection, thus emphasizing women's lower status (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Yun Ming forms this image of Siti Sara, enthralling beauty with naive views on the world. By doing so, he reduces Siti Sara's intelligence and values because she is a sociology lecturer who married to a civil servant. She is more than aware on the devastating consequences of 13 May racial riots.

Siti Sara is doubtful at first to continue her communication with Yun Ming. In the beginning, she refused to meet him personally after a few times he made such offers. However later, Yun Ming was instructed by Panglima to go to Sayong, Perak in order to investigate some incident regarding a group of young people breaking holy items and there he met Siti Sara as Sayong is her hometown. From there their relationship moves to the next level.

The main reason why Siti Sara allows this relationship turn sexual is because she was also caught in a loveless marriage. Her husband Omar, has changed drastically from a well-mannered and friendly man when she knew him while they were studying abroad, to a very condescending and aggressive husband later. Omar is one of the best examples for characters portraying hostile sexism. As stated by Glick and Fiske (1996), benevolent justifications for discrimination are more likely to be accepted than hostile justifications. Whereas women are more likely than men to reject hostile sexism, women often endorse benevolent sexism, especially in countries high in hostile sexism, where male protection is most appealing. Ironically, it may be that high levels of hostile sexism among men lead to high levels of benevolent sexism among women. While being physically, verbally and sexually abused by her husband, Siti Sara deems Yun Ming's gentle nature as a form of male protection which appealing to her.

“The night I first saw you, you were so beautiful, I simply wanted to hold you there and then. It seemed just the natural thing to do. We didn't have to talk, we didn't have to go through any formalities. We just simply had to get together. Did you feel like that? Just a little bit? Sara?” (p.68)

“Will you marry me?” (p.69)

“I'm not making this up, do you believe me.” But he knew he sounded false. (p.70)

The excerpts above highlight Yun Ming's positive attitudes and protection, idealisation and affection towards women which seem better than Omar's mistreatments on her. He idealises Siti Sara's beauty and innocent. Yun Ming wants to protect her from both; fear towards her husband and consequences of racial unrest. Siti Sara continues her relationship with Yun Ming because she is also looking for escapism from her loveless marriage and abusive husband.

### **Hostile Sexism**

Male dominance is prevailing in every culture, where men dominating high status roles such as in religious institutions, government and business. The large number of cases on the rise of

hostile sexism is because dominant groups incline to create hostile ideologies concerning the inferiority of other groups.

In *Green is the Colour*, there are two characters that clearly portray hostile sexism; Omar and Panglima. Under the concept of hostile sexism, Omar is showing the aspect of dominative paternalism. According to Glick and Fiske (1996) supporters of dominative paternalism rationalise patriarchy by viewing women as not being fully competent adults thus legitimizing the need for a superordinate male figure. It is a belief that men ought to have more power than women and the corresponding fear that women might manage to usurp men's power.

Omar believes that he found the way to escape the consequences of racial riots through living in secluded village under the guidance of Tok Guru Bahaudin. He then insists to move to this area without discussing with Siti Sara.

“...So you can give your notice. We'll leave at the end of this month.”

She said, “We should think about this carefully.”

“No need. I've decided.” (p.35)

By making such drastic decision, Omar is not only believed that his wife is not capable of making her own choices but also her opinions have no value to him. Omar just assumes Siti Sara should resign from her work, as a sociology lecturer and move to a very secluded village and leave her family, friends and life behind. After Omar saw how upset Siti Sara towards his decisions, he tried to appease her which Siti Sara replied with the following remark:

“No point, abang, what is there to discuss? You have never discussed anything with me. You have decided everything.”  
(p.38)

Through Siti Sara's description of Omar, it is clear to see that he have never seen her as equal. He becomes irritated when she tried to join the discussion among their friends. Up to one point, when their friends come to visit, he continues talking with them without even acknowledge Siti Sara and this act left her with “a vile sense of inferiority” (p.40).

Glick and Friske (2001) explain that the most likely reason for a man to be a hostile sexist is related with the notion of trying to maintain the domineering role. Omar sees that it is his right to control over Siti Sara as she is married to him. Another element which comes under hostile sexism is heterosexual hostility. This element views women as sexual objects and fears the power that women can gain through sexual attraction (Glick and Friske, 2001). Omar disrespects Siti Sara as a woman and a wife. In one chapter, he views her as merchandise for display.

“He was proud that she was his wife. There she was, lighter-skinned than even many Chinese, the nose in profile straight but not unduly prominent like Indian noses, and a complexion that reddened slightly in right places. He looked at her rounded hips as she bent slightly to serve a glass of rose syrup to Sabapathy” (p.47).

Omar's treatments toward Siti Sara are getting worse throughout the novel. He is verbally, physically and sexually abusing her. Siti Sara was frustrated with Omar's drastic decision to move to the village without any prior discussion with her. After their argument regarding Omar's decision, Siti Sara denied Omar's request for sexual intimacy which he turned violent and rape her.

“He took her that night, the first time in many months. She was startled, she said she was tired, but he was implacable....She shook her head, too frightened to speak. The next instants his fist landed on her ear, stunning her not so much by its force as by its unexpectedness. In a daze, she watched him come upon her, his eyes unseeing, his arm and legs flailing. He shook her limp body violently.” (p.50)

On their way to the village, Siti Sara does hope that Omar will stop his mistreatment against her. However, she is left frustrated because Omar becomes more aggressive and continues to sexually assault her.

“In the night she awoke to find him straddling her...He gripped her shoulders hard pushing his face against hers. She lay unresisting, leaving him flailing. In a frenzy he shook her repeatedly as if to arouse passion. She remained motionless though her blood on her lip tasted salt, and her eyes stared observantly at his struggle... Answer me *sundal*. I know there is a man.” Still she lay motionless, only staring.” (p.102)

These excerpts clearly illustrate how Siti Sara’s opinions and values do not matter to her own husband. Siti Sara’s fidelity is being questioned by her husband because she refused to have sex with him. Ironically, she started to have an affair with Yun Ming after Omar physically and sexually abused her. This action agrees with Glick’s and Fiske’s research, where they concluded that women often endorse benevolent sexism, especially when they are experiencing hostile sexism first hand, where male protection is most appealing. Unexpectedly, it may be that high levels of hostile sexism among men lead to high levels of benevolent sexism among women. Siti Sara’s infidelity is the result of Omar’s abusive and domineering behaviours. Yun Ming portrays the characteristics of benevolent sexism is tempting to Siti Sara because her fears lead her looking for safety and a form of escapism.

Throughout her marriage Siti Sara has endured verbal, physical and sexual abuses by her husband. These circumstances agree with a study conducted regarding violence against women. Johnson states that serious intimate partner violence often stems from motives to control a relationship partner. Intimate terrorism, a form of relationship violence that is primarily perpetrated by males, involves using psychologically, sexually, and physically abusive behavior to manipulate a romantic partner (Johnson, 2006). Omar demands utmost obedient from Siti Sara, where he treats he as a trophy to be displayed and readily to serve his sexual needs comply the nature of hostile sexism behaviours.

Another male character that strongly portrays hostile sexism is Panglima, a friend of Siti Sara’s father. Panglima is a study on paradox, where his actions most of the time are deviant than what he preaches. The first example is when Panglima gives advice towards Lebai Hanafiah, Siti Sara’s father regarding her choices of clothing. Panglima insisted that Lebai Hanafiah should be strict with her in making sure she is covering herself properly.

Panglima said, “In some countries they are caned. They are much better after that.” He spoke about *hukum hudud* as the way to ensure morality but her father was not listening. (p.162)

Through his speech at first Panglima looks like an upstanding man with clear views on religious teaching however they are just a façade to hide his hideous persona. Panglima portrays hostile sexism behaviours in both forms of dominative paternalism, where he believes men ought to have more power than women, and heterosexual hostility, where he views women as sexual objects and fears the power that women can gain through sexual attraction. He has consistent fear that women might manage to usurp men's power, thus making him extremely domineering and aggressive.

Panglima has sexually attracted to Siti Sara since she was a teenager. When he met Lebai Hanafiah, Panglima spoke to her father about the way young girls dressed nowadays. He emphasises that young girls "must be controlled" (p.162). Ironically the reason why Panglima puts so much effort in giving advice regarding how young girls should dress is because Siti Sara reminds him of a young girl from Chiangmai that he had raped.

"When Panglima learned that Sara had called, he was stirred in the same way he had been when he seduced Niramom the fresh-faced, creamy-complexioned young girl from Chiangmai. Before the brothel owner could initiate Niramom, Panglima had crushed the reluctance out of her and taught her to minister to him exactly as he wishes..he only had to land his fist hard on her lips once, her gums bled and she was pliant or responsive thereafter. She learned to sense what he wanted from the degree of pain he inflicted." (p.160)

These blatant and unabashed acts of violence do not agree with Panglima's view on girls' modesty as he preaches to Siti Sara's father. His attraction toward Siti Sara's is not for being affectionate or loving but more on sexually subjugating her. Even after she married to Omar, Panglima's lust on owning her is not receding in the least.

"...he drove with her into an unlit lane and wordlessly held her in a vice. She squirmed with pain but sank into his grasp the more completely. ...He shook her but she did not respond; the desire left him suddenly...At the Dewan as they walked up the steps he said to her in an almost neutral voice, "One day you'll be sorry". When told she had left with Yun Ming before the concert was over he said to his wife, "She has no shame to go with a stranger." (p.162)

The above excerpt is the best example of complexity of Panglima's behaviour. He initiated the physical contact with her but when Siti Sara remained quiet he lost all interest. He needs the sexual acts to be violent. He wants her to struggle so he is not only sexually abusing her but is able to inflict physical injuries as well. These acts give him the utmost satisfaction and in control, just like what he did to Niramom. In the same night, Panglima delivers his threat to Siti Sara and deems her decision to leave the party with Yun Ming as having "no shame" is a contradiction towards his uglier personality.

Social role theory emphasises that physical strength differences between men and women, together with certain social and ecological conditions, historically determined the distribution of men and women into social roles. These factors led to men performing roles that granted them greater decision-making power, authority, and access to resources thus setting the stage for patriarchy (Eagly and Wood, 2012). In this novel, Panglima is a friend to Lebai Hanafiah thus consequently playing a role of father figure to Siti Sara. Apart from that,

he is also holding a position as the Political Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs, thus giving him a prestigious position that comes with influence, power, status and a lot of advantages.

After Siti Sara's and Yun Ming's love affair was discovered both of them were arrested and interrogated by Panglima's henchmen. After two week in captivity, Siti Sara was released. She was not aware that she was captured by Panglima's men thus she went to see him to appeal for Yun Ming's release. Panglima is excited beyond measure because he believes that it is his golden opportunity to finally have her after lusting over Siti Sara for a very long time.

While pretending to listen to her plea, Panglima is able to put a drug in Siti Sara's drink. Even though in her disoriented state, Siti Sara tries to run away and fight against Panglima's sexual encroachment and these acts of resistance fill him not only with rage but also raising his lustful desires. He makes derogatory remarks by calling her *sundal* and a common *jalang*. He accuses Siti Sara of seducing and teasing him; first with the way she dresses herself and later by sleeping with Yun Ming.

He said, "You're *sundal*, you make yourself cheap with a *kafir*, why were you acting like this with me." (p.167)

"You talk freely, you dress freely, you only want to make people see you naked. You have caused me so much trouble, Sara, why don't you help me." (p.168)

Panglima is re-enacting the sexual acts of his fantasy by channeling rage, violence and dominance on Siti Sara who has lost her values and identity as a woman and an individual. All that remains of her according to Panglima is nothing but a temptress and a sexual object.

"He landed his fist on her temple and she staggered back a few steps....His blows on her face and body left a tingling sensation after the pain. She cried sharply, "No!" when he trust at her, but he held her in a vice, he was throttling her, and shouting, "Smile, smile..."(p.170)

"Panglima said, "She just *anak sundal*. Don't worry about her, Omar. It's a good thing you have thrown her out, she's just trash, trying to get favours from me." (p.175)

After Panglima viciously hitting and raping her while calling her with derogatory terms, his last words to Siti Sara are not only emphasizing on how insignificant he deems Siti Sara is but also diminishing her from being a human being; temptress and a sexual object to trash that have no value and should be discarded.

In conclusion the three male characters' treatments of Siti Sara are different from one another. Yun Ming perceives Siti Sara as an enthralling beauty and her innocent views on the issues of racial riots in Malaysia during that time enhance her appeal to him. Because of such views, Yun Ming believes that Siti Sara needs to be protected. Even though his gentle nature and protection seems to be romantic and positive, however when he undermines her intelligence, Yun Ming in reality is displaying the characteristics of benevolent sexism behaviours. The other two characters Omar and Panglima are clearly supporting the arguments put forth by Glick and Fiske regarding the features of hostile sexism behaviours.

Both of them illustrate dominative paternalism where they believe they ought to have more power than women and heterosexual hostility where they views women as sexual objects. Omar as a husband demands utmost obedience from Siti Sara where he excludes her in any decision making process as well as social interaction with their mutual friends. Panglima who held a prestigious position, the Political Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs which provides him with authority and influences, being domineering towards Siti Sara especially and women generally is embedded within himself. Both of them are verbally, physically and sexually abusing Siti Sara. Siti Sara is never standing on equal ground with either of these men and when she does not comply with their needs and desires they will use physical and sexual mistreatments to subjugate her.

## **CONCLUSION**

Glick and Fiske emphasize that under ambivalent sexism, benevolent and hostile sexism complement each other in reinforcing traditional gender roles and preserving patriarchal social structures of women as subordinate to men. Both forms of sexism share the assumption that women are inferior and restrict women to a lower social status. By using the three male characters in Llyod Fernando's *Green is the Colour*, this paper highlights the features of benevolent and hostile sexism behaviours.

The characteristics for benevolent sexism are evidently displayed through Yun Ming who conveys positive attitudes and protection, idealization and affection towards Siti Sara. However when he assumes Siti Sara's lack of understanding on the significant of political and racial issues after 13 May, Yun Ming blames this on her innocence views thus she should be protected from the ugly aspects of such events. Siti Sara's affair with Yun Ming is a form of escapism from her loveless marriage as well as highly volatile and abusive husband. As stated by Glick and Fiske, women often approve benevolent sexism, especially in countries high in hostile sexism, where male protection is most appealing. Paradoxically, it may be that high levels of hostile sexism among men lead to high levels of benevolent sexism among women. After experiencing verbal, physical and sexual abuses from her husband, Yun Ming's positive attitudes are more tempting to Siti Sara.

As for hostile sexism, it is best portrayed through Omar and Panglima because these two dominant figures are abusing, manipulating and subjugating Siti Sara throughout the novel. Hostile sexism relates to classic characterizations of prejudice as antipathy and reflects the hostile derogation of women who pose a threat to the gender hierarchy (Connor, Fiske and Glick, 2016). Omar was irritated when Siti Sara wanted to participate in the discussion among their friends and downright angry when she did not agree to leave and stay at the secluded village. He has never seen her as an equal thus making his decisions and opinions as ultimate and should have never been questioned. His needs must be put first and whether Siti Sara is willing or not, as Omar wields a higher authority on Siti Sara, she is only required to submit to his demands. The same situation occurs with Panglima. He holds a prestigious position which comes with power and influence plus he finds utmost pleasure in performing sadistic sexual acts. These behaviours comply with hostile sexism, where it is defined as having the elements of domination, degradation and hostility towards women.

The theoretical concept of ambivalent sexism is better understood through analysing the three male characters in *Green is the Colour*. The features of benevolent and hostile sexism can be differentiated from one and another through Yun Ming who displays benevolent sexism with his positive attitudes and protectiveness towards Siti Sara, while Omar as well as Panglima are under the category of hostile sexism for domineering, abusing and degrading her.

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