
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Presence of Biopower in Keiko Furukura from Sayaka Murata's "Convenience Store Woman"

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| ABSTRACT

The collected written and oral works of a society portraying values and beliefs as well as their challenges are referred to as literature. In terms of age and volume, Japanese literature is comparable to Western literature. Sayaka Murata, a prominent Japanese author, critiques conventions, exemplified by her 2016 novella "Convenience Store Woman," shaping the identity of a 21st-century woman. Keiko, Murata's heroine, works in a convenience store and lives through the question of absolute autonomy. This study investigates the presence of Biopower in Keiko Furukura from Sayaka Murata's "Convenience Store Woman." Specifically, it looks into character, settings, and themes. This study uses a qualitative method, specifically Discourse Analysis. The theories that support this study are Michel Foucault's Theory of Biopower and Sociological Literary Criticism by Kenneth Burke. The results of this study reveal that Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are the forms of Biopower present in the character. In the settings, both Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are also exhibited. Similarly, Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are the forms of Biopower found in the themes. Based on the findings, this study concludes that Biopower is present in Keiko Furukura from Sayaka Murata's "Convenience Store Woman." From the study's conclusion, the following are recommended: The Death of Individualism: A Character Analysis of William Stoner from John William's "Stoner," Construction of Identity: A Sociological Critique of Natsuko Imamura's "The Woman in the Purple Skirt," Challenging Gender Norms: An Examination of Gender Norms in Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," Challenging the Contemporary Feminism of Kojima in "Heaven" by Meiko Kawakami.

| KEYWORDS

Biopower, Foucault, Murata, Biopolitics, sociological criticism.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Literature originates from the Latin term 'litera,' which means 'acquainted with letters' (Himeles, 2022). Literature is defined as the collected oral and written works of a society that depict the people's beliefs, values, and aspirations, as well as their struggles in life. One of the forms of literature is a novella. It is longer than a short story but shorter than a novel (Rexroth, 2024). Comparable to English literature in age, richness, and volume is Japanese Literature (Keene, 2015). Sayaka Murata, one of Japan's most widely read authors today, has been bold in her outspoken criticism of conventions, structures, and hierarchies (Heath, 2022). Murata's 2016 novella "Convenience Store Woman," which won the Akutagawa Prize, is a literary exploration of how a woman's identity has changed in the twenty-first century (Steinberg, 2020).

Keiko Furukura, the heroine of Sayaka Murata's "Convenience Store Woman," is largely viewed for her free identity, evident in her defiance of the social norms of Japan, rather than someone whose entire concept of self is governed under social and political powers. This is what the examined pieces of literature have yet to scrutinize, and this study will investigate this. With her sense of autonomy being a life-long struggle, her acts of self-editing, emulating her workmates, and her reliance on her sister's advice, the book's theme of independence and liberation from social norms is being placed on a pedestal of a huge question mark. This is a

question that is not only interesting to answer but also important in the sense that, in the contemporary world, it asks about the possibility of absolute autonomy or the need to be under a social and political construct to have a framework of one's selfhood.

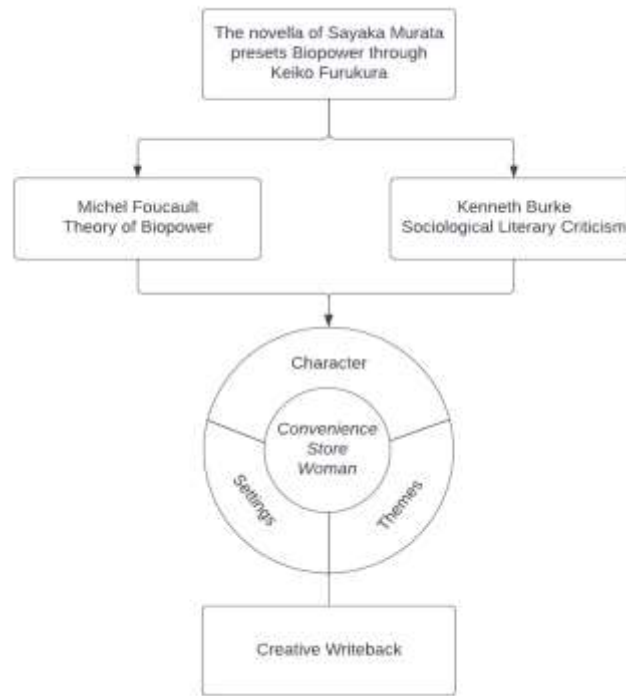


Figure 1: Schematic Presentation of the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. Literature Review

Character analysis is a literary tool used to understand a character's motivations, personality, and actions by examining their behavior, thoughts, and interactions within the narrative (Liden, 2024). Characters in fiction are shaped by their geographical circumstances, just as we are shaped by the city and nation that surround us. Thus, paying attention to the setting—what it is and how it is described—can help us understand the main ideas, conflicts, and themes of the stories we enjoy (Malewitz, 2024). Lastly, a literary work's theme is a universal concept, lesson, or message that is explored and developed throughout the piece (Scopa, 2017).

Foucault explores the relationships between knowledge and power within the context of what he called the normalizing of society. According to Foucault, there are two fundamental types of Biopower at work in the normalizing society: Biopolitics of the population and Anatomopolitics of the Human Body. Anatomopolitics concentrated on the body as a machine and looked for methods to tame it so that it might be incorporated into the new economic structure of industrialized societies while remaining useful and submissive. Biopolitics, on the other hand, is more concerned with the human species or populations. Managing a population includes controlling behavior, health and sanitation, births and deaths, and reproduction (Kristensen, 2013).

The Theory of Biopower by Michel Foucault is the first theoretical approach used in this study. This political tactic of biopower is manifested in the production and assimilation of the associated myths and narratives in the collective consciousness, which dictate and "discipline" an individual's life (Barabanov, 2020). As Foucault put it, biopower refers to the use of "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations" in contemporary states to order society and manage its citizens. Biopower is a tool used to organize, manage, and exert control over vast populations of people by imposing physical restrictions and regulations and persuading them that particular behaviors and ways of thinking are true (Lindsay et al., 2020).

Sociological Literary Criticism is the second theoretical approach used in this study. Kenneth Burke, a literary and critical thinker from the 20th century, proposed this type of literary criticism. In Burke's "Literature as Equipment for Living," he noted the specifics and nuances of this kind of criticism. The foundation of the said criticism is that it attempts to comprehend or situate literature in

a broader social context. It uses sociological research to codify the literary devices used to depict social systems. Sociological critique looks at the ways that society is mirrored in literature and vice versa. (Shalini & Samundeswari, 2017).

This study investigates the presence of Biopower in Keiko Furukura from Sayaka Murata's novella, "Convenience Store Woman" in terms of character, settings, and themes supported by Michel Foucault's Theory of Biopower and Kenneth Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a Qualitative Method, specifically Discourse Analysis. As this study utilizes Qualitative methodology, ideas, beliefs, or experiences are examined by gathering and examining non-numerical data. (Bhandari, 2023). On the other hand, Discourse Analysis is a research technique used to examine spoken or written language in light of its social environment (Luo, 2023). The researchers employ the Qualitative Method in analyzing the textual evidence of the assumptions that aid in concluding the investigation and Discourse Analysis in explaining contextual proofs, making connections within the text to reach judgment on the novel's character, settings, and theme in looking into the presence of Biopower in Keiko Furukura.

3.2 Sources of Data

The primary source of data is taken from Convenience Store Woman by Sayaka Murata. Copyrighted 2016 by Sayaka Murata. English translation Copyrighted 2018 by Ginny Tapley Takemori. Published by Granta Publications, 12 Addison Avenue, London, W11 4QR. 163 pages. The book is published in softbound.

The secondary sources of data are taken from electronic sources, published and unpublished theses, and dissertations.

3.3 Data-gathering Procedure

The study follows three phases. Phase 1. Character, Phase 2. Settings, and Phase 3. Themes.

Phase 1. Character

This particular phase focuses on the main character, Keiko Furukura. The collected data is sourced from her character traits, contextualized by her lines in the novella with the page where they can be read. Michel Foucault's Theory of Biopower is used in analyzing and identifying what form of Biopower is portrayed by each trait.

A table is used in this phase with the labels Character, Characterization, and Textual.

Evidence, Meaning, and Form of Biopower.

Phase 2. Settings

In the second phase, the settings in the novel are examined and determined with what form of Biopower is evident through the use of the Theory of Biopower by Foucault. These settings are then analyzed using Kenneth Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism.

A table is used in this phase containing the labels, Settings, Sociological Meaning, and Form of Biopower.

Phase 3. Themes

In the third phase, the novella's themes are examined. These themes are contextualized by a line from the novel. This phase uses Foucault's Theory of Biopower to identify the form of Biopower manifested. The themes are then analyzed using Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism.

A table is used in this phase labeled with Themes, Textual Evidence, Sociological Meaning, and form of Biopower.

This study is submitted to the CNUIRB panel detailing the justification of the rationale of the proposed study, research problem, prior experience or history relevant to the understanding of the study, including research literature, and potential benefits to the subject and society.

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the data to address the study's subproblems, as facilitated by the proposed literary method, and provides an extensive analysis and discussion of the findings of the study.

4.1 Character Analysis

Table I shows the investigation of the different characterizations of Keiko Furukura as portrayed in the novella using Michel Foucault's Theory of Biopower.

Table 1. Character Analysis

Character	Characterization	Textual Evidence	Meaning	Form of Biopower
Keiko Furukura	Individualistic	paragraph 1, page 11	Self-serving decisions	Anatomopolitics
	Introverted	paragraph 3, page 12	Freedom from social pressure	Anatomopolitics
	Proficient	paragraph 1, page 2	Expertise in the Workplace	Biopolitics
	Passionate	paragraph 2, page 43	Workplace Enthusiasm	Biopolitics
	Service-oriented	paragraph 8, page 82	Fulfillment through Service	Biopolitics
	Job-induced	paragraph 2&3, page 21	Work-related stress	Biopolitics
	Prescriptive	paragraph 3, page 20	Reliance on social etiquette & manuals	Biopolitics
	Easily influenced	paragraph 2, page 25	Social pressure to belong	Biopolitics
Emulator	paragraph 1, page 29	Fear of differing opinions	Biopolitics	

At the beginning of the novella, Keiko exhibits an individualistic trait as she once said that she refuses to say anything if not necessary even when she's told to make more friends and play more.

In Keiko's earlier years, she is characterized as a girl who exhibits unusual curiosity and a lack of social awareness. When Anatomopolitics, or the discipline of the human body, is first studied, the school is one of the main institutional realms (Arnason, 2012). One way of recognizing Keiko in this particular time of her life is by observing the commanding and controlling social setting she was in—her school. This display of Anatomopolitics made Keiko an individual.

Similarly, Keiko's introverted nature continued until her teenage years, admitting that she didn't change after high school until college.

Although she avoids social relationships, Keiko does not lose her sensible independence and is able to survive those years of her life by making sure she does not cross a line. Circumstances, especially ones before the character develops their defining trait, will provide context and structure in fathoming the character's current state (Robinson, 2023).

Accordingly, when Keiko begins working in the convenience store, she sees to it that her proficiency is always at its best, as she said that rules and instructions are ingrained in her body.

In the novella, it is difficult to argue against the fulfillment and meaning that Keiko finds working in the convenience store. For a character whose most preferred way of expression is not language, their actions may speak louder for them (Team, 2023). The workplace is a place where structures and plans are strictly imposed in order to maintain productivity (Kristensen, 2013).

Thus, Keiko's passion for being a convenience store worker is evident, confessing that she comes to work without fail as her way of being a well-functioning part of society.

A character's morals and convictions shape a significant portion of who they are (Team, 2023). Provided that Keiko has been serving in this convenience store for 20 years, her ceaseless sense of enthusiasm is a testament to her loyalty to this occupation. According to Biopolitics, human bodies are resources or productive forces that fuel capitalism in society (Mahanarongchai, 2020). It is in this store that Keiko feels purposeful, and the expertise that the store relies on, together with her workmates, is what only completes her day.

On one occasion, Keiko is self-examining on her being service-oriented, thinking that maybe she's working because she wants to be useful.

Another aspect of Keiko's reliance on social cues in order to act that takes a large fraction of her character is her will to please people. A vast array of techniques for controlling and influencing populations are included in the Biopolitics of the population (Arnason, 2012). This makes her sensitive enough to prioritize people whom she needs a sign of approval from, even if it means dismissing her own feelings and thoughts. This power of Biopolitics dictates her actions in order to gain acceptance in social settings.

Keiko, being job-induced as she is, performs in the convenience store even outside her working hours, recalling moments where, in her sleep, she dreams about working in the convenience store.

In the novella, she constantly speaks about getting the right amount of sleep and filling her stomach each night for her to wake up the next day with the right energy to work and basically do it all over again. Fears and concerns can motivate just as much as goals and desires (Team, 2023). This elucidates the unsettling ramifications of Biopower, Biopolitics in specific, of how it can undermine professional autonomy (Fleming, 2022).

As a result of Keiko being too prescriptive, structuring her life according to her being a convenience store worker, she sometimes does not know who she is when she admits that she does not know who she is outside the manual.

This scheme of identity-formation exhorts the character to make sensible decisions (Team, 2023). This reliance on the manual that Keiko reads whenever she is struck by the crisis of her identity evidences the control of Biopolitics. Keiko's will and desire to conform to what exactly she is required restricts her from knowing what exists beyond what is already known.

For this reason, Keiko is easily influenced by the people around her as she once said that her present self is formed out of everyone around her.

A character's interactions with others can all be signs of character development or change (Team, 2023). She figured that if she dresses and behaves the way a woman of her age usually does, then she will have an easier time blending in. This manifestation of Biopolitics proves Keiko's obsession extends further to how controlled she is by the standards of society, at least in some aspects of it. Individuals in the present era find their individuality by following or breaking the norm. Still, this distinct individuality is created by the disciplinary authority that scrutinizes and assesses it (Maas, 2015).

Hence, Keiko's words and actions are emulations of aggregated features she notices from everyone when she admitted that she only says the same thing to gain validation and keep harmony in the workplace.

A way to examine Keiko is to look at her as a self-aware, consistent emulator who consciously and cautiously tries to be in agreement with her workmates at all times. A character's opinion in important conversations reflects how they have grown and moved throughout the narrative (Team, 2023). This is a display of the presence of Biopower in the workplace where balance and solidarity do not only exist in the nature of the occupation but also in the social aspect of it.

The forms of Biopower present in character are Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics.

4.2 Settings Analysis

Exhibited in Table 2 is the investigation of the settings of "Convenience Store Woman" using Foucault's Theory of Biopower and Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism.

In the novella, Keiko's apartment is a place for her to recharge as a discipline she committed to, showing a manifestation of Anatomopolitics.

Keiko finds a haven in her apartment from the demanding social engagements and expectations that wear her out outside. This helps her feel more in charge of her life, which is consistent with the idea of Anatomopolitics.

Comparably, Mami's condo is a place of acceptance and comfort for Keiko, where Anatomopolitics is observed.

Her sister shows that she accepts Keiko by being in close contact with her and genuinely caring about her welfare. Mami's acceptance of Keiko serves as a reminder of the value of family understanding and support, especially in the face of difficult decisions (Anders, 2011). Foucault believes that power exists in relationships rather than in objects or people, and it functions at all societal levels in addition to those involving citizens and the state, classes, and subordinates (Maas, 2015).

Table 2. Settings Analysis

Settings	Sociological Meaning	Form of Biopower
Keiko's Apartment	Place to recharge	Anatomopolitics
Mami's Condo	Place of acceptance	Anatomopolitics
Hiromachi Station Smile Mart	Place of control, order & purpose	Biopolitics
Primary School	Disciplinary institution	Biopolitics
Parents House	Place of traditions & conformity	Biopolitics
Miho's House	Place of alienation	Biopolitics

On the contrary, Hiromachi Station Smile Mart is a place of control, order, and purpose, where the control of Biopolitics is present.

Keiko is given a defined framework and set of guidelines to follow. Every task, from stocking shelves to communicating with clients, has a proper area, and there are protocols for doing it. This illustrates how biopower suppresses people's individual identities in an effort to standardize and homogenize them. Significant liberties are operationalized by biopower to increase worker productivity (Fleming, 2022).

In addition, Keiko's primary school also evidences the presence of Biopolitics in its nature as a disciplinary institution.

Not only in the novella, but primary school, from a sociological standpoint is a hierarchical establishment where instructors and other authority individuals control the kids. It would have been Keiko's instructors' responsibility to enforce rules in order to keep the classroom in order. She gains an understanding of the value of fitting in with her peers and conforming. Foucault used the term to characterize a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding and forcing them to submit (Cisney & Morar, 2015).

Meanwhile, the house of Keiko's parents is a place of traditions and conformity giving way to the presence of Biopolitics.

It is common for people to realize that they are not totally free of their early influences, even if they go on to reject all or part of the family culture (Harrington, 2010). Keiko's parents' rejection of her unconventional decisions limits her power in forging her life path. As a result, a dynamic is created that highlights the intricacy of family relations and their influence on an individual's biopolitics by fusing her parents' biopolitical influence with affection and care.

Lastly, Keiko finds it difficult to embrace the traditional lifestyle at Miho's home, signifying the Biopolitics' presence in such a social setting.

A demonstration of class difference is one way to look at social engagements (Harrington, 2010). As friends, the difference between Keiko and Miho's life choices is emphasized by the fact that Miho is married and has kids. The emphasis on external success

indicators subtly criticizes Keiko's way of living. Their existence serves to support the notion that Keiko's way of life is inferior and has to be improved.

Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are the forms of Biopower exhibited in the settings.

4.3 Themes Analysis

Table 3 presents the investigation of themes of "Convenience Store Woman" using Foucault's Theory of Biopower and Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism.

Individuality is a theme prevalent throughout the novella as Keiko Furukura manages to come of age and discover herself, saying people were bizzare and must be out of their minds.

Despite her mother's efforts to enforce a traditional perception of the issue, Keiko retains her own unique perspective, rejecting the concept of conformity. This inability to adhere to societal norms is a constant theme throughout the novella, as Keiko forges her own path while resisting external pressure to conform, demonstrating Anatomopolitics. The universality of literary themes is a crucial aspect (Scopa, 2017). To place Keiko in a real-world setting, we can associate her with those people who seem to live in a world of their own but are trying to participate in their chosen circles.

However, Keiko's incapacity sometimes to grasp reality emphasizes how alienated she is from norms when she observes what her mother is doing. There, she finally realized that maybe she shouldn't have done what she did, but she still couldn't understand why.

As her mother tries to get her to feel guilty or ashamed, Keiko views the situation differently and doesn't think there is any need for an apology or regret. This further suggests Keiko's place in Anatomopolitics. This alienation suggests that people who depart from society standards are excluded and considered abnormal (Cisney & Morar, 2015). This is one of the defining experiences of her childhood where she feels misunderstood and alone for the first time.

Table 3. Themes Analysis

Themes	Textual Evidence	Sociological Meaning	Form of Biopower
Individuality	Paragraphs 1 & 2, page 8	Deviation from perceived norms	Anatomopolitics
Alienation	Paragraph 5, page 9	Social estrangement	Anatomopolitics
Social assimilation	Paragraph 3, page 10	Integration into mainstream culture	Biopolitics
Self-estrangement	Paragraph 5, page 33	Internal struggle and conflict	Biopolitics
Socialization to maintain humanness	paragraph 3, page 25 & 26	Normalization through imitation	Biopolitics
Job shaming	Paragraph 4, page 65	Biased judgment on the nature of someone's work	Biopolitics
Gender roles	Paragraph 5, page 68	Conventional gender norms	Biopolitics
Loss of personal autonomy	Paragraph 6, pages 131 & 132	Existential ambiguity	Biopolitics

Hence, Keiko thinks that in order to manage social relationships, she must imitate others and obey instructions; that's when she decided to keep her mouth shut as best as she could outside the home.

This mimicking of the accepted and expected generalized actions in order to maintain order is an exact demonstration of Biopolitics (Kelly). Her choice to copy or mimic others and keep her thoughts to herself in order to achieve social assimilation is a result of her ingrained wish to blend in and not draw attention from the public. This then gives us the insight that this integration of only the acceptable deeds into each person's life to attain unity and social structure among common citizens clearly indicates a loss of individuality to a certain extent as what happened to Keiko Furukura.

Thus, Keiko discovers that she is taking on a character that is not who she really is when she thinks to herself that it is her with different clothes and speech rhythms that is smiling. Who was it that her friends were talking to?

The division between what she wants on the inside and what society expects of her outside contributes to her self-estrangement. This thematic observation leads Keiko to give way to the influence of biopolitics on her life. The influence of biopolitics can be seen in the degree to which it constitutes a global mass impacted by global processes (Cisney&Morar, 2015). From a sociological aspect, this thematic exploration of the questioning of oneself due to the bigger institutions whose power is broader and more difficult to discern but evidently is highly influential presents Keiko with a challenge she battles with so exhaustingly.

Additionally, Keiko's detailed observation of the interactions led her to believe that socialization is a way to maintain humanness, saying that she would probably infect others with the way she speaks, too. She also thinks that infecting each other is how we maintain ourselves as humans.

Here, Keiko observes how employees at the store mimic their supervisors' and one other's speech patterns and body language. She views this process as a type of "infection," arguing that people reaffirm their common humanity through language and behavior exchanges. Keiko's remark emphasizes the idea that socializing is an essential part of being human. The novella's theme of socialization as a means of preserving humanity emphasizes the various ways in which people look for a sense of belonging and commonality through common actions and experiences. She did not start out this way. Rather, it took her years of working in the convenience store and years of trying to understand human relationships and their necessity.

At times, Keiko receives discrimination for her job, and her reaction to it is derived from her unique knowledge of societal standards, as she once remarked about getting looked down upon because of her customer service job. She finds this fascinating, and she likes to look them in the face when they do this to her.

As a figure who battles to live up to social standards and expectations, Keiko finds comfort and meaning in her work at the convenience store. This did not faze Keiko, though, until she meets Shiraha. Unlike Shiraha, Keiko is motivated and ceaselessly enthusiastic. Keiko is not naive. She only sees everything from a different angle, and sometimes, this ability of hers works to her benefit. In and of themselves, creative works can serve as normative sources of social comprehension (Harrington, 2010). Keiko views social conventions differently, which is reflected in her response to job shaming.

In the novella, Keiko's co-worker Shiraha complains about women's desire for males of greater social rank. He said that they're all after snaring a guy who works at the same company and won't even look at him. Women have been like that since the stone age.

The presence of conversations regarding gender roles, particularly this utterance done by Shiraha, is an observation of modern individuals who cannot keep up with the changes in society. A topic that appeals to emotions deeply and viscerally will make the character more understood and empathized with (Callaghan, 2023). This manifests the extended influence of Biopolitics. Shiraha's remarks emphasize the widespread influence of old gender stereotypes and patriarchal structures, implying that, despite societal development, fundamental parts of human behavior remain unchanging.

Furthermore, in Keiko's most desperate times, she has shown to have lost her personal autonomy, having been so reliant on her work that she pondered if she would be cured if she left the convenience store. Or is she better staying working there?

Keiko, who lacks a strong sense of self-direction and feels confined by social norms, exhibits a profound dependence on outside approval and instruction. This strongly exhibits her reliance on the control of Biopolitics. This places Keiko as one of the common people in the contemporary world as art is a reflection of society; that is, it uses metaphors and allusions that were appropriate for the communities in which it was made (Anders, 2011), where without occupation and without the stream of income, life is worthless, if not impossible. This also serves as a global concept, instruction, or warning (Scopa).

In the themes, Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are the forms of Biopower present.

4.4 Creative Writeback

In this phase of the study, a creative response is offered by the researchers through an original piece of poetry. This writeback poem, specially dedicated to Keiko Furukura, honors her complex identity not to encourage the romanticization of her struggles but to attempt to capture Keiko in a light that does not restrict her within the isolation of individualism nor in the prejudice of her efforts to participate in society. The poem is written as follows.

A Price But A Product

I once lived through silences,
 through voices unlived
 I slept awake and indifferent
 to the luxury of lives before me
 I am patched outside by noises and whispers
 calling for somewhere to perch
 but I've awoken recently, for once
 my independence was too fragile
 but I was never hopeless

I am livid with the echo of reality
 that life is not a bed of roses
 but I am in the same vein as bamboo
 for whenever the wind whips strongly
 I learn to bend, not break

growing amid the daily pour of rain
 I strive to stand tall in a harsh world where
 I know that even in the simple places
 one can grow with unyielding, unshakable roots
 and bloom in an exceptional glow
 if you live life uniquely, in your own will
 and still have faith for society, you'll learn that
 identity is not a price you have to pay, but
 a product of your survival

5. Conclusion

The investigation on the presence of Biopower in Keiko Furukura from Sayaka Murata's "Convenience Store Woman" offers a sociological relevance to identity formation. The results of the study reveal that Biopower is manifested in Keiko Furukura in its two distinct principles, Biopolitics and Anatomopolitics. In terms of Keiko's character, the two tenets are present. In the novella's settings, both tenets of Biopower are also observed. With the novella's themes both Anatomopolitics and Biopolitics are also being manifested.

As mentioned, the study is limited to character, settings, and themes. These are the literary elements the researchers used in investigating the presence of Biopower in the main character of the novella. In this literary investigation, results are derived from sociological, literary investigation guided by Michel Foucault's Theory of Biopower and Kenneth Burke's Sociological Literary Criticism. For future researchers venturing into related investigations, the following are recommended: The Death of Individualism: A Character Analysis of William Stoner from John William's "Stoner," Construction of Identity: A Sociological Critique of Natsuko Imamura's "The Woman in the Purple Skirt", Challenging Gender Norms: An Examination of Gender Norms in Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice", Challenging the Contemporary Feminism of Kojima in "Heaven" by Meiko Kawakami.

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