

## I WANT TO LIVE: THE DEMONIZATION OF NICO ROBIN IN *THE ONE PIECE* COMIC

Ajeng Keysha Anandita<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>English Studies Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran

<sup>1</sup>E-mail: ajeng23001@mail.unpad.ac.id

**ABSTRACT.** Women in fiction have received a lot of prejudice and demonization by altering their physical appearance or making their whole character linked with evil names. Some even faced traumatic events caused by the effects of their demonization. Using close literary analysis with a mixture of textual analysis of dialogue and narration with visual analysis through feminist perception, this study analyzes the portrayal and depiction of demonization in Ohara's archaeologists, particularly of Nico Robin's character. The objective of this study is to analyze how *One Piece* portrays the life of a woman who is a victim of demonization and whether Nico Robin embodies women's empowerment, challenging the narrative that women are fragile. The findings and analyses reveal that through several arcs and character development, Nico Robin has proved herself to be a powerful individual with a strong drive to live despite the demonization and trauma that have haunted her since her childhood. The study argues that *One Piece* has challenged the demonization of women's culture in fiction, with Nico Robin as proof that demonization is more of a label that is socially constructed than one's moral condition, and can be embraced as empowerment.

**Keywords:** *One Piece*, Nico Robin, demonization, comic

### I WANT TO LIVE: DEMONISASI NICO ROBIN DALAM KOMIK *ONE PIECE*

**ABSTRAK.** Perempuan dalam fiksi telah banyak mengalami prasangka dan demonisasi dengan mengubah penampilan fisik mereka atau membuat seluruh karakter mereka dikaitkan dengan nama-nama jahat. Beberapa bahkan menghadapi peristiwa traumatis yang disebabkan oleh dampak demonisasi tersebut. Dengan menggunakan analisis sastra yang mendalam dengan campuran analisis dialog tekstual dan narasi dengan analisis visual melalui persepsi feminis, studi ini menganalisis penggambaran dan penyingkapan demonisasi pada arkeolog Ohara, khususnya karakter Nico Robin. Tujuan studi ini adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana *One Piece* menggambarkan kehidupan seorang perempuan yang menjadi korban demonisasi dan apakah Nico Robin mewujudkan pemberdayaan perempuan, menantang narasi bahwa perempuan itu rapuh. Temuan dan analisis mengungkapkan bahwa melalui beberapa alur cerita dan perkembangan karakter, Nico Robin telah membuktikan dirinya sebagai individu yang kuat dengan dorongan kuat untuk hidup meskipun mengalami demonisasi dan trauma yang telah menghantuinya sejak kecil. Studi ini berpendapat bahwa *One Piece* telah menantang demonisasi budaya perempuan dalam fiksi, dengan Nico Robin sebagai bukti bahwa demonisasi lebih merupakan label yang dibangun secara sosial daripada kondisi moral seseorang dan dapat diterima sebagai pemberdayaan.

**Kata-kata Kunci:** *One Piece*, Nico Robin, demonisasi, komik

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of demonizing women has been around for centuries in fiction, it is used in horror stories, science-fiction movies, and even in young adult novels. It is to the point where ancient Greek mythology women's characters were often viewed as manipulative and deceitful, mirroring the patriarchal society at that time (Meehan, 2017). Another example of the demonization of women in classic mythology, as cited in Creed (2023), "The Sirens of classical mythology were described as enormous birds with the heads of women. They used their magical songs to lure sailors close to shore in order to

drive the sailors' ships into hidden reefs. The Medusa and her two sisters also presented a terrifying sight. They had huge heads, their hair consisted of writhing serpents, their teeth were as long as boars' tusks and they flew through the air on golden wings." In Japan, one of the most well and popular media, regardless of social classes, age, sex, education, and occupation, is comic or also known as *manga* (Ito, 2000). *Manga*, in many cases, often stereotypes women as either burdensome or evil, especially in *shonen*, where it has a lot of battle scenes and the story is mainly centered around male main characters.

In the past few years, *manga* has proved its rapid surge in popularity by making its way to the global audience. For a long time, *manga* has been commonly read in the East Asian region, including Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan, however, the current rapid growth of demand for *manga* in the US and European countries does not seem to have been envisioned (Lee, 2009). Among them, one of the most popular *manga* series right now is *One Piece*. The *One Piece* series is a comic that is written and illustrated by Japanese *manga* artist Eiichiro Oda. It became a comic that was loved by a lot of people since its first appearance in the 34th edition of Weekly Shonen Jump on the fourth of August in 1997 (Nurlatifah & Kasmana, 2020). Over the years, *One Piece* has been translated into many languages. In 1999, *One Piece* was serialized into an *anime* series, and in 2023, its first few arcs were transformed into a live-action series streamed on Netflix. Through *One Piece*, in 2022, Oda has made history as a Guinness World Record Title for the same comic book series by a single author who has published the most copies (Pilastro, 2023). The title was first verified in 2015 and was later confirmed again 7 years later in 2022, after the series reached the milestone of 500 million copies printed around the world (Pilastro, 2023).

Without a doubt, *manga* and the demonization of women in fiction have piqued interest from scholars for different concerns and reasons. To provide some examples, previous research has analyzed the villainization of women in media and literature (Bissler & Connors, 2012; Silverman, 2023; Patterson, 2017), silenced independent women (Duarte Montávez, 2015), and the impact of such demonization and villainization (Ryalls, 2012). Researchers in previous studies have discussed the pattern of demonizing women and its impact mainly on Western literature, while Japanese media, such as *manga*'s portrayals of the demonization of women, is less known. The narrative of women demonization in *shonen* series, as a superpower's names linked to the power system created by the world-building of the series, also remains less known. For that reason, the question like: how demonization of women is pictured and represented as empowerment in *One Piece*, particularly through Nico Robin? Will become the main focus of this study.

Even though the demonization of women in fiction has numerous examples in every culture, the studies on it mainly focus on traditional literature and Western society. *Manga* has become one of the most popular media for its uniqueness in conveying narratives through paneling and distinctive art styles.

Another reason why *manga* had a surge in popularity with global audiences is the appeal of its variety of genres, such as melodramas, fantasies, slice-of-life comedies, and hard science fiction (Brenner, 1977). The *One Piece* series, besides its popularity, is renowned for its large-scale world-building and how often Eiichiro Oda used societal and political themes that mirrored real-life situations in his narratives. Compared to other popular *manga*, *One Piece* has significantly brought up political and societal issues in every arc. *One Piece* also uses folklore in utilizing the power of each character, including women characters. Although the main characters of *One Piece* are mainly men and almost every arc is centered around the male heroes of the story, female characters in *One Piece* play important roles in the narratives. Female characters like Nico Robin and Nami, who are part of the Straw Hat crew's lead characters, make a significant contribution to helping the crew achieve its goal. Other than the pivotal roles of female characters, *One Piece* also challenges the trope of demonizing women through Nico Robin's character. This study focuses on the portrayal of demonization in Nico Robin's character, as it is believed that Nico Robin has proven herself throughout the story that demonization is not only to be feared but can also be embraced, making her stronger and giving her the will to live.

Shifted from the demonization of women in Western culture to the portrayal of demonization in Japanese comics (*One Piece*), this study aims to analyze the demonization of Nico Robin's character through her interactions with other characters in the story, her character design and superpower, and through narratives within the story. Moreover, this study will also examine how Nico Robin embodies women's empowerment through character development and utilizes her demonization as a means to counter the dominant group in the story, as well as how other characters support this development.

## METHOD

The data of this research was collected from the *One Piece* comic series, focused on the official English translations of the digital version of the comic that is available online on Manga Plus by Shueisha (Oda, 1997). The site was used as the data source because it provides authorized English translations. *One Piece* has so many chapters in it, but for this research, only a few chapters were analyzed in which Nico Robin's backstory and development were shown. The selected chapters were: (1) chapter 114: Nico Robin's first appearance; (2) chapter 218: Nico Robin declared she did not want to live; (3) chapter

391-398: Nico Robin's back story; and (4) chapter 1020: She embraces her demon title. The first step was to conduct a close reading of the chapters that had been selected, and the next step was to analyze the narrative in the story. Not only were texts in the bubble speech analyzed, but also the visual aspects, such as character design, facial expressions, and visual representation, were selected as the focus of this research. Both verbal and visual elements of the story were treated as analytical data. Thus, the analysis was conducted by focusing on how demonization is constructed within the story.

The data was analyzed generally with borrowed techniques from the mixture of literary analysis, feminist studies, and comic theory. To help deepen the analysis, this research used primarily the concept of demonization and portrayals of women in literature (Cocca, 2016; Yubero et al., n.d.) These concepts resulted in bullying at a young age (Olweus, 1993), a power imbalance between the victim and the oppressors (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017), and the concept of trauma and trauma healing (Van der Kolk, 2014). Together, these theories provided a thorough and detailed analysis of how a female character in a male-dominated narrative is portrayed. The analysis included not only the thoughts and speech bubbles of Nico Robin but also her facial expressions and actions in the story, both before and after her development to embrace the demon identity.

The results of this research were presented in a note from a total of 11 chapters from three different arcs: Alabasta, Enies Lobby, and Wano Country. The findings contained an analysis of the narrative and visuals of the story, followed by photos to help present and visualize the character's development, both in mental health condition and physical appearance, after several arcs were completed. The discussions' purpose was not only to describe the unfortunate events and their consequences that are happening to Nico Robin's character, but also to connect her events and stories with how the narrative implicitly conveys women's empowerment through text and visual aspects of the story.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### The Victim of Demonization: Life of a Bullied Young Girl

Nico Robin was born in the West Blue, more specifically on an island called Ohara. Ohara is a small island which is infamous for its scholars and a large library named "Tree of Knowledge" full of books from all over the world. Nico Robin, at the age of five, was left to live alone by her mother, Nico

Olvia, an archaeologist, to begin a journey in the vast sea, unravelling the secret of the Void Century in an indestructible stone that contains historical knowledge written in an ancient language known as the Poneglyph. Life as a lonely eight-year-old kid is already hard by itself, not to mention the discrimination and demonization she got from the people around her. Her custody was given to the relatives who mistreated her. Furthermore, she was viewed negatively as a devil fruit user, and was called a demon and monster several times because of her power. To make situations worse, she even got bullied for simply existing in the same place, just because she has the power that other people do not have. Young Nico Robin did not have any friends, as she was isolated from society for her 'sin', which is being different from others.

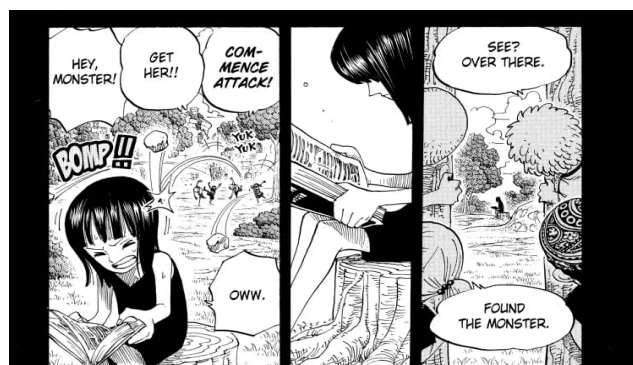


Fig.1 The discrimination received by young Nico Robin from people around her age (Source: Oda, 1997)

Bullying, in a book concerned about bullying that happened at a young age, by Olweus (1993), is defined as "When the victim of the bullying is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions. Olweus specified further that it is considered a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another." Olweus further explained that "negative actions can be carried out by words (verbally), for instance, by threatening, taunting, teasing, and calling names and also when it is physical such as when somebody hits, pushes, kicks, pinches, or restrains another – by physical contact. But also, negative actions can mean when someone is intentionally excluding another from a group." Olweus, in the same book, also mentioned that, other than being carried out by a single individual, bullying can also happen when it is carried out by a group of people.

In other words, what happened to young Nico Robin, who was just eight at the time, was indeed a form of bullying by the people of the island.

The only small minority group of people who were not involved was the scholars. By looking at the definition of bullying by Olweus, it could be concluded that the bullying of young Nico Robin was at a severe level, for it to match all the “requirements”. She was called a monster, got thrown stones at, and even got isolated over and over again to the point she did not have any peers around her age and only could stare with a blank look on her face while facing the crowd, where she was looking at a happy family in front of her. Furthermore, the bullying that she got, which was done both physically and verbally by kids around her age, was also encouraged by the parents of the kids. Even though the parents might have known about the bullying that was done by their kids, they turned a blind eye to it and blamed Nico Robin for being a weird kid instead. This behavior showed the power imbalance between Nico Robin and the people of Ohara. Menesini & Salmivalli (2017) said that “imbalance of power can be derived from physical strength, social status in the group, or from group size (e.g., a group targeting a single person). Power may also be achieved through knowing a person’s vulnerabilities (e.g., appearance, learning problem, family situation, personal characteristics) and using this knowledge to harm him or her.” In this case, the people around young Nico Robin were fully aware of her situation, along with her vulnerabilities, yet continued with their awful agenda to bully this young girl.

Young Nico Robin, while she had the power to destroy the village and plot revenge towards the people who bullied and isolated her, she chose not to. Perhaps it was because she had not unlocked that big of a power yet, but in her mind, she was still trying to fit in and wanted to get recognition from the people of Ohara. She got used to all the bullying and also demonization by the people around her, but even so, one day it was her birthday. She came home after a long day in which she got bullied yet again, and when she came home, no one was there to celebrate her birthday, not even her relatives. Her relatives' daughter was also having a birthday at that time, and they decided to go out for dinner, leaving Robin all alone, crying, on her birthday. For an eight-year-old kid, spending her birthday completely alone after going through a rough day is already tough by itself, not to mention the awful lingering feelings that she gets every time she gets isolated and demonized by the people who are close to her physically in her daily life.

Young Nico Robin also got demonized not only by the people of Ohara but also by the World Government. As it was already said in the beginning, Ohara is a place full of scholars, where the most

brilliant minds of archaeologists gather to study the history of the world. The scholars not only studied recent history but also a time in ancient history that is considered a crime to even search about its existence, which is called the Void Century. The information and hints about the Void Century were eradicated by the World Government, except for Poneglyphs, which could not be destroyed no matter how hard they tried. The Poneglyph itself is written in an ancient language that only a few people with brilliant and genius minds can read, and Robin is one of them. Young Nico Robin, who was eight at that time, was considered the youngest archaeologist ever. She proved that she is smart and has high enthusiasm for the Void Century, and was telling this to her professor, Clover. Of course, Clover was against it; to try to decipher the Poneglyph is against the law created by the World Government and could end up with the death penalty. But Robin insisted on continuing to study and searching for the Poneglyph. Young Robin thought that if she tried her hardest and became a real archaeologist after discovering the Poneglyph, then eventually she would be allowed to join everyone else and not become an outsider anymore. The story continues, and her mother, Nico Olvia, and Saul the giant arrive on the island, carrying bad news that Ohara will be obliterated by dropping a bomb on the island under orders from the World Government, as they knew too much about the Void Century.



Fig. 2 Saul warns Nico Robin as the Navy Battleship is coming to the island. (Source: Oda, 1997)

Regarding the demonization of Nico Robin because she has the knowledge of Poneglyphs and Void Century, she was considered a dangerous presence for the World Government. Patterson (2017)

as cited in Kirshbaum (2024) said that, “Historically, women have been targeted and persecuted for their association with one side or the other of that binary; by categorizing a woman in either one of the extremes, society can dismiss her, punish her, and get her rebellious, revolutionary, or atypical ideas out of the way.” Young Nico Robin faced a horrific event upon her eyes where her professor got shot right in front of her and her people got eradicated from the island simply because they are scholars and know too much about the Void Century. The World Government intended to impose a penalty and show its authority by demonizing the scholars of Ohara, including Nico Robin, as the only survivor from the genocide planned by the World Government. As a result of the demonization of Nico Robin, by referring to Giner-Sorolla et al. (2012) in their research concerning demonization, “Demonization is a special kind of moral mandate that identifies an out-group as evil, and justifies any measures taken against them, including violence.” Nico Robin was hunted as a young girl and throughout her life as a demon child, which corresponds with Giner-Sorolla et al.’s research in which victims who got demonized and turned by the people around them into moral villains could result in a lack of moral consideration they got, and punishing them for their sin became a moral duty. Not only Nico Robin was hunted and got bounty on her head as an eight-year-old and lived on the run for two decades, but she also was betrayed countless of time and told over and over again that she was not worthy to live in this world for she has sinned and named ‘The Demon Child’.

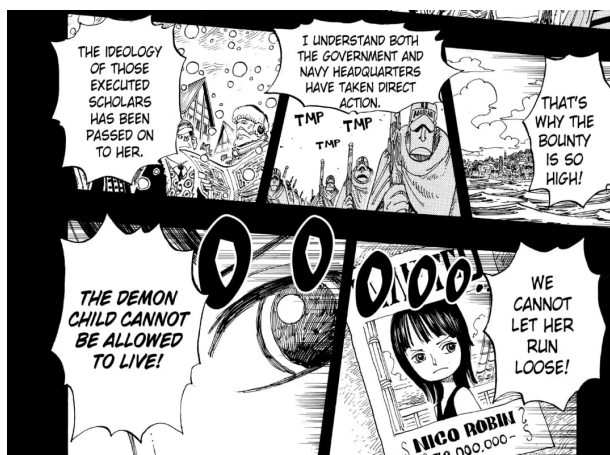


Fig. 3 Young Nico Robin on the run after surviving Ohara’s genocide (Source: Oda, 1997).

Eiichiro Oda in *One Piece* portrayed Nico Robin as the victim of systematic bullying that makes her image in public constructed not as a mere kid

anymore, but as a monster living within the society. Ever since she was a little kid, and even throughout her adulthood, she has been verbally abused, socially excluded, and her right to exist has been denied, as the people around her keep on forcing the devil image on her and label her as dangerous. These acts are resulted by fear-driven reactions to her superpower, which visually and narratively picture and mark her as a demon. Therefore, when she joins the StrawHat crew at the age of 28, the effect of the words that she kept hearing for decades affected her too deeply, which resulted in her not having the will to live and hating to be associated with the word demon.

### Risen from the Bottom to the Top: Proof of Empowerment

Despite all the discrimination, bullying, and isolation she got when she was younger, Nico Robin did not give up on pursuing her dreams as an archaeologist. Even though after she escaped the genocide or in the *One Piece* world also known as “Buster Call” she lived in the run for decades and has joined multiple crime syndicates and pirates crew, she still had not lost her initial goals and keep on going with her main quest, searching for the Poneglyphs that scattered around the world. At first, Nico Robin does not believe in a genuine human connection, such as friendship, because of what has happened to her while she lived on the run. People would betray her for some money or just take advantage of her as she bears the power of Devil Fruit and her ability to decipher the Poneglyphs. This relates to the concept of trauma by Van der Kolk (2014), where he said, “Traumatized people are terrified to feel deeply. They are afraid to experience their emotions because emotions lead to loss of control.” Van der Kolk added, “After trauma, the world becomes sharply divided between those who know and those who don’t, in which Nico Robin at the time does not have anyone to trust with.”

However, this does not last for too long as she met the StrawHat crew with Luffy as the captain when she was known with the name Miss All Sundays, whose role was to be the key partner of a clandestine organization named Baroque Works led by Crocodile. The reason why she partnered with a notorious criminal like Crocodile was to find the Poneglyph, which contains the information about an ancient weapon called Pluto that is rumoured to be located in Alabasta, where Baroque Works took over the kingdom. Crocodile wanted to utilize Nico Robin’s ability to decipher Poneglyph and locate

Pluto, and their relationship with Crocodile was a mere business with Crocodile did not view Robin as a friend but as a tool for his gain instead. On the other hand, her relationship with the StrawHat crew at that time was not good as she was their enemy, in which Luffy and his crewmates needed to defeat her and Baroque Works to free the kingdom and give the authority back to whom it was supposed to belong, the Nefertary families. As Luffy and other StrawHats defeated the Baroque Works organization, Nico Robin continued with her initial purpose, that is, searching for the Poneglyph; she lied to Crocodile, saying that the Poneglyph in Alabasta is not what he was looking for. Robin, after getting discouraged because the Poneglyph did not contain the information of the Void Century, and the weight of stigma that keeps on burdening her becomes heavier, she attempts to end her life right there. Nico Robin falls into one of the three types of stigmas explained by Goffman (2009), “There are blemishes of individual character with weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty, these being inferred from a known record of, for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, homosexuality, unemployment, suicidal attempts, and radical political behavior.” Nico Robin is one of those with weak will, which led to her having a suicidal attempt, and does not have the courage to live. Goffman also said that a person with a stigma is viewed as not quite human by others, and this is the attitude of people towards Robin before the StrawHat crew interfered in her life.



Fig. 4 Losing her last hope, Nico Robin attempts to end her life (Source: Oda, 1997).

Nico Robin’s suicide attempt, though, was prevented by Luffy later on is the narrative consequence of long-term bullying, demonization,

and social exclusion. Her initial distance, suspicion, and hesitation towards the StrawHats could be seen as a form of a survival strategy, given she had been betrayed so many times before. Although the StrawHat crew views Robin as an equal—as a friend—she remains unable to immediately accept the recognition. This reflects the psychological impact of her demonization and lifelong stigma. The turning point is during the Enies Lobby arc, where Robin chooses to sacrifice herself to protect the new relationship she started to form. Her willingness to just disappear, again, shows how the demon image has deeply impacted her, it has already been internalized that she assumes that her existence inevitably brings harm to others. The StrawHats’ decision to rescue Robin despite the stigma that is imprinted on her functions as a narrative rejection of her constructed monstrosity.

But despite that, Robin at that time still believed that she did not have anyone or anywhere to go, and she also added that she did not have any place to return to. This behavior, as cited in Van der Kolk’s (2014) book, shows that “For traumatized people, in order to recover, mind, body, and brain need to be convinced that it is safe to let go. That happens only when you feel safe at a visceral level and allow yourself to connect that sense of safety with memories of past helplessness.” Robin has not considered the place where StrawHats are safe because she did not want to experience betrayal from someone who finally sees her as a human being. Robin did not want the StrawHats to rescue her as she fears that her foes (the World Government and Navy) will keep on haunting her, resulting in her becoming too much of a burden for the crew and being cast aside by them. However, Luffy and others disagreed with what Robin said and reassured her by making a declaration of war against the World Government and boldly accepting the world as their enemies if it is for Robin’s sake. Luffy even encourages Robin to say it with her mouth that she wants to live and leave all the doubts that she had behind.

Van der Kolk (2014) also said, “Being able to feel safe with other people is probably the single most important aspect of mental health; safe connections are fundamental to meaningful and satisfying lives.” This reflects in Robin’s action, moved by their efforts in rescuing her, finally accepts the concept of wanting to live after being told many times she should not, and has a wish for herself and to have faith in her friends. She decided to have a long journey with the Strawhats in the sea and have an equal and genuine human connection with others. This is a pivotal point in Robin’s life after she got

past her trauma by building a human connection. Herman (2015) in her book said, “Recovery, therefore, is based upon the empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new connections. Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation. In her renewed connections with other people, the survivor re-creates the psychological faculties that were damaged or deformed by the traumatic experience. These faculties include the basic capacities for trust, autonomy, initiative, competence, identity, and intimacy.” In this case, Robin renewed the definition of friendship and human connection in her vocabulary and replaced it with a new and healthy one she got from the StrawHats.



Fig. 5 Nico Robin finally has the will to live (Source: Oda, 1997).

After healing from her trauma, Nico Robin became more confident and finally embraced her demon identity through her power, the Devil Fruit. Her turning point and ultimate character development happen after the time-skip, which is two years since she met the StrawHats. She became a powerful and dependable woman in whom even her male crewmates depended and entrusted her to win against a powerful enemy. Nico Robin has proved to herself and the world that even after traumatic events and being demonized by the whole world through propaganda, she can be a stronger and independent woman. Nico Robin defies the usual trope in comics which women superheroes are often depicted as fragile, such as in (Donaldson, 2013; Madrid, 2009; Robbins, 1996; Wright, 2001) as cited in Cocca (2016), “These female superheroes were written and drawn as weaker, more emotional, in need of rescue, more geared toward romance with men, more

interested in domestic chores like cooking and sewing.” Adding to this, (Hanley, n.d.; Hickey, 2014; Brown, 2013; Cocca, 2014) as cited in Cocca (2016) said, “Most superhero titles have white male-dominated teams and white male leads, and tend to portray female characters as weaker and in a sexualized manner.” Following these statements, Yubero et al., n.d. in their research said, “It can be concluded that women in comic books are represented according to traditional sexual roles, located at home and in ‘the work for women’. They appear in the performance of the “role of mother”, charged with taking care of children and home.” In *One Piece*, Robin is not seen as a weaker character, and she is considered one of the strongest characters in the StrawHats. She also does not bear the role of mother in the group as her official role is to be the archaeologist of the crew, leading most of the intelligence part, and has proven that she is represented and acts beyond the traditional sexual roles.



Fig. 6 Robin's male crewmates trust on her ability (Source: Oda, 1997).

In a small island called Onigashima, part of the Wano Country arc, she faced an enemy, Black Maria, and introduced a new physical form of the awakened devil fruit in her. She takes the literal form of a devil and even names her attack as “Demonio Fleur”. These remarks reflect her acceptance and succession in embracing the demon title, as now she does not hate the idea of her becoming a demon to protect her friends. She won against the enemy, and this alone can be proof of her character development in the story.



Fig. 7 Nico Robin's demon form (Source: Oda, 1997).

Nico Robin, throughout the story, has only been viewed as either a tool or a powerful enemy. Initially, before she embraced the demon identity and made the demonization she received as her power, she was viewed as vulnerable both physically and mentally. Her identity as a woman also makes it worse, as the enemies often underestimate her ability. All these arguments before show that Nico Robin has survived her trauma and made herself a powerful woman by making use of the stigma that she got, that is, the demonization by the World Government. Oda, through *One Piece*, has challenged the usual trope in which demonized women in fiction are often depicted in a bad light, and has shown that demonization can also be seen in a good light in a way that is beneficial for the victim of demonization.

## CONCLUSION

*One Piece*, written and illustrated by Eiichiro Oda, portrays the demonization of Nico Robin through a social mechanism of exclusion done through bullying, ostracizing, and repeated labeling, rather than through Nico Robin's morality or actions. By naming and giving her the title "The Demon Child," the narrative shows how the fear of women's power can be translated and reconstructed into a monstrous identity by society. This process reveals that demonization is a form of violence that justifies Nico Robin's dehumanization and isolation. *One Piece* also challenges the usual trope that equates demonized women with absolute and inherent evil. Through Robin's character who is caring, emotionally mature, and capable of feeling deep empathy to others, Oda presented demonization as a

socially constructed label that can be reclaimed and transformed into empowerment. As a result, demonization becomes an important narrative tool that not only shapes Robin's character development, but also critiques the usual narratives that reduce powerful women to figures that is feared and hated by society.

Oda, through Robin's character, proved that even though the demonization caused a depressing effect on her character, rather than surrender to the oppressor, Robin is a strong and independent woman. The genuine human connection called friendship that she obtained in her last 20s from the StrawHat crew has changed her for the better, and she can finally move on from the trauma that has been haunting her since her childhood. Robin has embraced her demonization and made it her biggest power to beat the oppressors and enemies. Instead of holding a grudge and staying to be viewed as a fragile woman despite the demonization because she is a woman, Robin came back stronger and even became the kind of person her crewmates believe in to beat the enemies alone. *One Piece* has succeeded in portraying Nico Robin as a powerful woman in the story, even with all the traumatizing events she has been through because of the demonization.

This research has found and analyzed that the demonization of Nico Robin in the *One Piece* comic is not only portrayed through textual context and bubble speech of the characters in the story but also through the visualization of the demon itself in Robin's character power. *One Piece* has proved that demonization of a woman character can also be portrayed positively, and this is important because *One Piece* is one of the most world-renowned comics. The portrayals of female characters like Robin, who is strong yet kind even after receiving demonization and oppression, can be seen as a development in comics' narratives as a whole. Female characters in comics before this are either viewed as fragile or straight up evil, but *One Piece* has changed that through Robin. Robin served as the icon of women's empowerment and has changed the perspective of demonization through her characterization in the story.

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