



08 - 10 August 2025  
Berlin, Germany

## **Global Acclaim and Local Censure: Gendered Discourses on *The Vegetarian***

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### **Abstract**

This study explores how two selected texts portray *The Vegetarian* (2007) by South Korean author Han Kang in opposing ways, highlighting contrasting perspectives on the same literary work. *The Vegetarian* received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2024 for its outstanding contribution to contemporary literature, with the Nobel Committee praising its unique poetic style. The novel delves into themes such as historical trauma, the relationship between body and soul, and the boundaries between life and death. While internationally acclaimed, the novel sparked controversy in South Korea, particularly within the educational context. Critics questioned its appropriateness for young readers due to its graphic content and portrayal of psychological distress. This study analyzes both the Nobel Committee's official statement, which emphasizes the novel's social and ethical value, and the response of the South Korean National Federation of Parents' Associations, which condemns the book as harmful to youth. Through Critical Discourse Analysis, the study reveals how language shapes public perception, exposing broader cultural tensions between global literary recognition and local moral standards. Ultimately, the research underscores the role of literature in provoking ideological debates about censorship, education, and the societal impact of confronting human vulnerability and collective trauma.

**Keywords:** cross-cultural reception; han kang; literary censorship; literary reception controversy; nobel prize