

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Study.

The word feminism, here, refers to the thought of demanding for equality between sexes. For years, women are demanding an equal standard on purity for men and women. The Encyclopedia Americana noted that the most important phase of feminism movement was Woman Suffrage Movement, which was proposed at Seneca Falls, New York, July 19 1848. This Woman Suffrage, firstly, was calling out the right of women to vote. Starting with the movement, the spirit of consciousness of feminism was spread out over countries until the present days (1977, 102 – 103).

The result of the movement taking for years is a different, or a brand new way in looking and thinking about women. They are no longer the “suppressed” class under a fundamentally sexist system dominated by males. The spirit of feminism resulting progress in women’s world, this world. Just like the slogan appeared at the web-site of UNIFEM stated that “*progress for women – progress for all*”. It means that any progress in developing the quality of women can be the way to get progress of this world.

We can see many occupations held by women: pilot, teacher, doctor, and many other jobs required by females this period. Today, we are no longer thinking that women lead some males are something “queer”.

The process of creating new women ideas, as the result of feminism movement, was not so simple. The present condition of women takes a lot of sacrifices, victims and time, for sure. One important aspect in spreading the values or the spirit of feminism is socializing the feminism itself. The supporters of feminism at very early time used many demonstration or females marching on the streets of many cities and yielding out the ideas of feminism spirit. In the opposite direction, some feminists choose to popularize feminism spirit through written materials. The supporters feel rather suitable to tell people using written words and phrases. Works of written literatures also take part in socializing the spirit of feminism over countries. By exposing feminism ideas in the form of written literature, those ideas can be read and understood by many people in various countries. The socialization through written materials is one of the important factors in the feminism development. That was the reason why this thesis chooses literary work as the basic source of this writing.

The choosing of literary field as the source of this thesis' substance is concerned with the function of literature as a mean to

understand life. It is so, because literature depicts the actual occurrence that human beings deal with. getting in touch with literature will highly rise awareness of the values of life since its subjects implied moral and social as well. Working out on literature is expected to bring the writer to the deepening of consciousness in gazing at values of life, including feminism. Moreover this thesis is going to deal with literary work in the form of novel.

Compared to other types of literary works, novel offers more details, which make the readers, grasp the understanding of its essence easily. Here, the elements of fictions are also figured out more clearly and lively with the result that the writer will be able to construct the impression of the implied thought.

As R.J. Rees cited the definition of novel from The Shorter Oxford Dictionary in his book *English Literature, an introduction for foreign reader*, as the following phrase: a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and actions representing real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity. Thus, novel is a story, considerably longer, depicts real life in a complex sequence of events(1973; 73). Rees also stated that novel is the most widely read of all kinds of literature.

There are so many authors that put feminism values in their works. One of those authors is Pearl Sydenstriker Buck, or well

known as Pearl S. Buck. She was the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1938 (Litz, 1963; 121). She also won the Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for her best-known novel *The Good Earth*. Pearl S. Buck known as an author that wrote many novels using China for the background of the stories. Her interest in dealing with Chinese matters is because she already knows China before America. Pearl S. Buck even learned to speak Chinese before she got her English. From *The Good Earth* many readers knew that Pearl S. Buck had gained a thorough knowledge of China and the Chinese. Carl Van Doren noted that the Chinese family analyzed by Buck seemed to be “as familiar as neighbors” (Carl Van Doren in Litz ; 1963, 116).

One of her novels is *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*, which is the subject of this thesis. In the novel of *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*, Pearl S. Buck depicted a family of a single-parent (mother) with her three daughters who are trapped in a turbulence of communism’s peak time in China. Madame Liang as the mother in the novel had to face some conflicts with her surroundings for she had a different way of thinking among others. After leaving her husband, Madam Liang supports her family living by running a classy restaurant in Shanghai. The restaurant give her both financial benefits and social protection for she can earn a

large amount of money and she also keeps the good relationship to her loyal customers who were, mostly, people in the ruling class.

Realizing that the new China is rising and unfortunately in opposite direction with her way of thinking, Madame Liang decided to send her three daughters to America. In the U.S. the daughters (Grace, Mercy, and Joy) formerly live with Madame Liang's companion and later chose their careers and of course their life as they wanted to be. The problem is rising when the government of China realize that the three daughters of Madame Liang posses potential assets which can be used in building China. In the opposite way, Madame Liang wants her three daughters to stay save in the U.S.

I.2. Statement of the Problems

Dealing with the preceding discussion, the writer will give an attention on Madame Liang character by proposing problems to analyze into these following questions.

- a. What is Madame Liang point of view toward China's new-era?
- b. How is her struggle against the dominant class of China considering the three daughters she had?
- c. What kind of value(s) or spirit of feminism does Madame Liang's character may depict?

I.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find the answers for the proposed problems through the analysis. Thus, this study is intended to:

- a. To describe Madame Liang point of view toward China with its new-era.
- b. To reveal Madame Liang's struggle against the ruling class of China.
- c. To explore Madame Liang's character, and to find feminism value(s) or feminism spirit in it.

I.4. Significance of the Study

This study is an attempt to give deeper insight into human mind and women's, or more precisely a widow woman character, problems through the observation of human character. This study also tends to enrich our knowledge about the literary work, in this case the novel by Pearl S. Buck under the heading: *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*.

Furthermore, it will hopefully be an input for other further studies concerning this work.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

In this study the writer will give a major attention to Madame Liang's character. In other words, the thesis concerns Madame Liang character only, through the intrinsic element of character, plot and setting. Even though the novel is entitled *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*, the story of three daughters, the writer still feels more interested in examining Madame Liang, the mother character.

I.6. Related Studies used in The Thesis

In this thesis the writer will use the studies previously constructed in the field of feminism in the English Department of Airlangga University Surabaya and in the English Department of Petra Catholic University Surabaya as the input for the research constructed in this thesis. There are many researches constructed in the field of feminism previously in the two universities mentioned above. The writer noted that the following theses give many contributions in constructing this thesis. Henny wrote her thesis on the attention of a mother character faced and solved so many problems based on Edith Wharton's *The Mother Recompense*. While Rani Yuni Astiti dealing with the struggle of the oppressed black woman, Cellie, who broke the patriarchal boundaries in black community in the United States, from the famous novel of Alice

Walker's *The Color Purple*. Cellie broke the boundaries by raising her self-esteem and pride due to her succeed in earning financial support independently. Still in the field of women's struggle, Saiful Arifin wrote the struggle of main woman character in Nawal El-Saadawi's *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor*, who is struggling her self-identity by maintaining herself to get a high education.

The writer is focusing his research to the struggle of Madame Liang to brake the patriarchal oppression and the power of the Government of China. Madame Liang maintained herself with feminism values and hold the philosophical values of Confucianism tightly as the guidance or way of her life.

I.7. Method of the Study

In working on the thesis, the writer applies the research in the library to support the analysis of the problems. The research here means, as a process of finding information, which is useful to help the writer to go direct in his or her research.

The first stage is constructed by collecting information from many books, articles, encyclopedias, internet with its web-sites and other printed materials related to the work of Pearl S. Buck, particularly *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*. The writer also tries to get information from any particular book dealing with literary theories and approaches that will be used in the analysis.

However, Pearl S. Buck's *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang* is the main source of this research. While the other sources are used for supporting the study.

The method, which is later used, is a descriptive analysis. It is applied to give descriptive explanation of the problems found in the work through the dialogues, events, and actions of the story itself. This method is applied based on the work itself and supported by other information concerning this work. The writer will use some quotations from many sources to confirm and support the analysis.

Finally, through this analysis, the writer hopefully is able to provide a deep understanding of Madame Liang's character in the book of *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang* by Pearl S. Buck in such a scientific writing.

I.8. Definition of Key Terms

In this thesis, the writer will use some important terminologies, which are to be repeated many times. Those important terms are to be noted as in the following terminology. The writer's guidance in constructing the definition of key terms is *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and encyclopedias.

- a. Bourgeoisie/bourjuist – one whose social behavior and political views are determined or influenced by private and,

- or property interest. A middle-class person, whose income derives from the profits or commercial and industrial enterprise.
- b. China's new era – refers to the time when the communist gained control of China by defeating the Republicans.
 - c. Communism – a system or condition real or imagined in which goods are owned commonly rather than privately and are available as needed to each one in a unified group sometimes limited, sometimes inclusive, and often composed of members living and working together. A similar system preventing amassing of privately owned goods and assuring equalitarian returns to those working
 - d. Confucianism – the system of teaching of Confucius and his disciples characterized by central emphasis on the practice and cultivation of the cardinal virtues of filial piety, kindness, righteousness, propriety, intelligence, faithfulness that historically has formed the basis of much of Chinese education, statecraft, and religion.
 - e. Feminism – the 19-th century movement seeking to remove restrictions that discriminate against women.
 - f. Monarchy/monarchial – undivided rule or absolute sovereignty by single person. A form of government having a single usually hereditary chief of state with life tenure whom

may exercise governmental powers varying from normal to absolute.

- g. Patriarchal/patriarchy – a social system that puts sexes in a hierarchical slope where the male is in the prior position than the opposite.
- h. Spirit – soul, immaterial, intellectual or moral part of man, mental or moral attitude that can indicated as behavior considered as tendency or influence that rouses or causes development.
- i. Turbulence – refers to the political and economical condition of China in its change from the Nationalistic State into Communism-era.

CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND