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## **WOMEN'S EFFORTS TO FIGHT AGAINST CHINESE PATRIARCHAL TRADITION IN PEARL S BUCK'S PAVILION OF WOMEN**

**A THESIS**



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## ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini membahas karya Pearl S. Buck yang berjudul Pavilion of Women. Dalam novel ini penulis menganalisis mengenai diskriminasi gender terhadap kaum perempuan di Cina dan melihat bagaimana usaha-usaha yang dilakukan oleh kaum perempuan untuk melawan serta merubah budaya-budaya Cina yang mendiskriminasi kaum perempuan yang disebabkan oleh tradisi Cina tersebut. Selain itu sebagai pembandingnya penulis juga memberikan gambaran tradisi Cina terhadap perempuan yang dianggap sebagai bentuk praktek patriarki.

Dalam menganalisis novel ini, penulis menggunakan kritik sastra feminis dengan teori yang diusung oleh Elaine Showalter, *Gynocriticism*. Dengan pendekatan yang digunakan dapat diperlihatkan bagaimana perempuan menulis tentang pengalaman perempuan (*woman's experience*) dalam sebuah karya sastra yang kental budaya patriarki. Adapun data-data terkait dengan pembahasannya diperoleh dengan metode kualitatif dan dituangkan dengan metode deskriptif.

Berdasarkan hasil yang didapat dari analisis terhadap karya ini dan didukung dengan sumber-sumber yang ada maka penulis menyimpulkan bahwa ada usaha-usaha kaum perempuan Cina dalam menentang tradisi-tradisi Cina yang berada di bawah system praktek patriarki. Hal ini tergambar melalui tokoh-tokoh kaum Perempuan, Madam Wu, Linyi, Rulan dan Ch'iuming yang berusaha untuk menolak dan berjuang untuk kebebasan dari system patriarki budaya Cina yang masih dianut oleh keluarga.

Kata Kunci: *Gender discrimination, Gynocriticism, Women's Effort.*



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**SYNOPSIS PAVILION OF WOMEN**

**BIOGRAPHY OF PEARL S. BUCK**

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of the Research

The society has always treated men and women in different manner, and this act has eventually built up an inequality in term of roles and rights between two parties. In traditional gender roles, society believes that women are passive, weak, emotional, and also submissive. The unequal treatment between men and women does not only come in form of negative stereotypes on women's characteristic, but also in term of limitation in job and education for women. It shows that women are conditioned as inferior party in the society.

However, Tyson explains that "the inferior position long occupied by women in patriarchy society has been culturally, not biologically produced" (86). Being aware that such oppression is artificial, women then start to have desire for equality. Hence, women's struggle against any kinds of patriarchal oppression begins to take place in various fields, including in literature. This is known as feminist movement. In literature, there are some feminist writers who attack the idea of patriarchal oppression toward women as well as to promote women's freedom through their works. One of them is Pearl S. Buck, with her novel Pavilion of Women.

Pearl S Buck is an American writer who wrote about China and other Asian tradition in her literary works. Buck was born in America in 1892 but she spent much

of her childhood and young adult life in China (Zhenjiang). In Buck's writing, she gets many influences from her experience when she lives in Zhenjiang China. It can be seen from Xu Xiaoxia article Zhenjiang Pearl S. Buck Research Association, describe that:

China is Pearl S. Buck's home and Zhenjiang is her Chinese hometown. In her childhood, Pearl S. Buck was just like a Chinese child, receiving a traditional Chinese education, speaking Chinese, writing Chinese characters and playing with Chinese children [...]. Every tree and every blade of grass in Zhenjiang greatly influenced her in her later literary writings. Zhenjiang's rich culture, local customs, and its characteristics of both northern and southern China, with its contrasting and reflecting mountains and waters, provided endless [...].

After earning degrees from Randolph-Macon Woman's College and Cornell University, she published several award-winning novels. Her first novel entitled East Wind: West Wind was launched in 1930. It was followed by The Good Earth (1931), Sons (1932), and A House Divided (1935), together forming a trilogy on the saga of the family of Wang. The Good Earth stood on the American list of best sellers for a long time and earned her several awards; among them are the Pulitzer Prize and the William Dean Howells Medal.

The novel Pavilion of Women (1948) tells about a married woman (Madam Wu). On her fortieth birthday, she takes a decision that she has planned for a long

time. Right after her birthday, she tells her husband that after twenty-four years of being physically living together, she wishes him to take a second wife. Once Madame Wu become alone in her own, she tries to do things that she cannot do previously, such as reading books. Madame Wu also has a big desire to know about the outside world. When her son begins to study English, she tries to listen and learn from it. Later on, she learns from a foreigner, named Brother Andre, who will eventually change her life. In brief, this story tells about the nature and roles of men and women in Chinese society and how the Chinese women efforts to fight against patriarchal oppression.

The Chinese tradition does not allow women to study, especially reading and writing. It is because men assume that if women can read and write, it can change their mindset. Men simply want women to be obedient to men. They want women to only stay at home, to become good wives who manage all the necessities of the husband, the house, the family and the children. As Tyson states in Critical Theory Today (2006), such condition may lead to the occurrence of four form of sexage. They are “The appropriation of women’s time, the appropriation of the products of women bodies, women’s sexual obligation and women’s obligation to care for whichever members of the family cannot care for themselves as well as for healthy male family members (2006:99).

From the explanation above, it can be seen that women are culturally conditioned to be the object for men. Women’s freedom is taken and they are



oppressed in patriarchal society by a set of tradition that the society built. This is what Pearl S. Buck tries to highlight in her novel Pavilion of Women. Considering this explanation, the writer conducts the research by using Feminist criticism since this novel has woman's character which is believed to carry the feminist values within her. "Feminist criticism is a kind of feminist movement which analyzes literary works which deals with a woman as a subject" (Guerin, 1999: 197). In addition, feminism demands equality in all aspects of life, such as in education, marriage, and social life, in order to realize that women are valuable persons and have the same rights as men. Therefore, feminist critics try to make their own type of literature and literary criticism to talk about themselves in their own perspectives.

Depart from the explanation above, the writer wants to see how Pearl S. Buck as an author describes about Chinese women based on her own perspective in the novel entitle Pavilion of Women. Hence, the writer entitles her research as **"WOMEN'S EFFORTS TO FIGHT AGAINST CHINESE PATRIARCHAL TRADITION IN PEARL S BUCK PAVILION OF WOMEN"**.

## **1.2 The Identification of the Problem**

This research deals with two main problems; they are the patriarchal oppression toward women by the Chinese tradition and the women's efforts to fight against patriarchal Chinese tradition. The writer assumes that in this novel, the

women characters are victim of patriarchal system in China who try to fight for their right.

### **1.3 The Scope of the Research**

In doing the analysis to the novel Pavilion of Women, the writer makes some points to limit the research. In short term, the research will strive to answer these respective questions:

1. What kinds of oppression are faced by Chinese women because of the patriarchal system in the Chinese tradition?
2. What are women efforts to fight against Chinese tradition?

### **1.4 The Objective of the Research**

The objective of this research is to describe how the Chinese traditional rules have oppressed women. In this novel, the female characters are suffering for the oppression which is legitimated by the society as the tradition. In addition, the writer wants to show how the women struggle under the patriarchal system in the China. Thus, the analysis is focused on the Chinese female condition in Chinese society.

### **1.5 The Review of the Previous Studies**

In conducting the research the writer uses the novel entitled Pavilion of Women written by Pearl S Buck as the primary data. The writer also needs

supporting data to analyze the novel. In order to gain respective data, the writer evaluates other previous researches which are related to this research.

The first study related to the novel that the writer has found is a thesis by Istighfaroh (2006) from Islamic State University of Malang, entitled Stereotyped Roles of Women Reflected in Pearl S. Buck's Pavilion of Women. In her analysis, Istighfaroh focused on the stereotype of women's roles as shown in the novel. In Chinese patriarchal society, there are several stereotypes about women. The stereotypes range from stating women as beautiful creatures; women as means of reproduction, women as less intellectual creatures, women as motherly figures and as servants of their husbands. However in the novel, Buck shows different women stereotype. Buck describes that women are not always weak and stupid. Buck depicts Madam Wu as a beautiful woman who is smart and independent. In fact, she is more clever and independent than her husband. This thesis is useful for the writer to see how Buck describes about the women stereotype.

The other supporting previous studies that are related to the theory are found in English Department Library of Andalas University. Many of the students also used the feminist study, especially Gynocriticism in their research. One of the example is a thesis by Faiqah Mahmudah (2010) entitled Women's Strategies to Fight against Patriarchal System: A Feminist Analysis toward Pearl S. Buck's Imperial Women. In this thesis, she discuss about the position of women based on patriarchal system and the women strategy to fight the patriarchal system. In this thesis, she also

focuses on the image of women that describe by Pearl S Buck. This thesis useful for writer thesis, because it is suggests some information about patriarchal system that happen in China.

Another example from English Department thesis is a thesis by Audrey Maharani Aga (07185033) entitled Women's Independent: Pearl S Buck's Sexual Ideology as Reflected in her Imperial Woman (2011). In this thesis, she discusses about women struggle against tradition oppression that faced by Chinese women. This thesis also focuses on the author ideology about sexual for women in China and the image of women that describes by the author in her literary story. This thesis useful for writer thesis, because it suggests some information about patriarchal system that happens in China.

By evaluating the previous studies above, it can be seen that there are similarities in term of theory and object of the research; that is the novel Pavilion of Women. Regardless, this research will be different from the previous studies above because the study focused on analyzing women efforts to fight patriarchal system in Chinese tradition.

## 1.6 The Theoretical Framework

In this research, the writer strives to analyze the experience of Chinese women who face gender discrimination as well as to analyze the kinds of women's effort to fight against traditional roles of gender discrimination in China. The writer

applies feminist criticism proposed by Elaine Showalter. According to Guerin, "Feminist criticism is concern with the marginalization of all women: that is with their being relegated to a secondary position" (1999:196). Showalter's concept and practice of feminist criticism is known as Gynocriticism. As stated in Bressler's Literary Criticism, "...the term Gynocriticism to construct a female framework for analysis of women's literature to develop new models based on the study of female experience, rather than to adapt to male models and theories" (184).

Furthermore, Showalter "identified three historical phases of women's literary development: the 'feminine' phase (1840-1880), during which women writers imitated the dominant tradition; the 'feminist' phase (1880-1920), during which women advocated minority rights and protested; and the 'female' phase (1920- ), during which dependency on opposition that is, on uncovering misogyny in male texts is being replaced by a rediscovery of women's texts and women"(Guerin, 2004, p. 198). From three phases above, the writer sees Pavilion of Women deal with third phase that is female phase because Pearl S Buck tells about women experience under patriarchal system in Chinese society and the women efforts to fight against Chinese tradition.

For this research, the writer will use Gynocriticism that focused on women as writer. Women writers want to make a difference to male author in producing the literary works. Usually male writers portray female characters as an object to men; whereas female writers portray female characters based women's thought about how

a woman should be. According to Bressler, there are four models that uses in Gynocriticism to analyze women literary work, such as biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and culture. "Cultural, investigates how the society in which female authors work and function shape women's goals, responses and points of view" (1994:185).

From the explanation above, the writer focuses on cultural models to analyze the data of research. The writer will see how the author describes the influence of culture toward women in Chinese society, which is adopted in her literary work. Culture is one of patriarchal system that is happened in society. Most feminists believe that our culture is a patriarchal system that is one organized in favor of the interest of men.

In this research, the writer will apply theory proposed by Elaine Showalter. The writer of the Pavilion of women novel is a woman. Gynocriticism (woman as writer) is very suitable to use in this research.

## 1.6 The Method of the Research

In conducting the research the writer follows three steps. They are collecting data, analyzing data and presenting the result of analysis.

### **1.6.1 Collecting Data**

There are two kinds of data in this research, namely primary and second data. The primary data is the novel Pavilion of Women by Pearl S. Buck as the object of study; the secondary data is the information taken from books, study guides, and sites that are related to this study. The data are collected by using library research method.

### **1.6.2 Analyzing the Data**

In analyzing the data, the writer starts from analyzing the primary data, then the writer analyze each part of the novel which supports the analysis by using book, the theory and the application of literary criticism especially deals on feminist approach which supports the analysis.

### **1.6.3 Presenting the Result of Analysis**

The result of this analysis is presented descriptively based on feminist theory. The writer explains about how the women's efforts to fight for the equality as Chinese women and the discrimination between genders in Chinese tradition toward women as reflected in the novel.

## CHAPTER II

### PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF PAVILION OF WOMEN

To understand a literary work, we must first comprehend all the fundamental aspects of the work. Therefore, in this chapter, the writer explores the intrinsic elements of the novel Pavilion of Women by Pearl S. Buck. The writer focuses on explaining five elements: characters, theme, setting, plot and point of view. These five elements are important in analyzing a fiction, to be the basis for a deeper understanding of the literary work.

#### 2.1 Characters

Characters are the imaginary persons that are created by the author. Characters can draw the emotion of readers into the story when they read the literary work. As Klarer states in his book An Introduction to Literary Studies, “A typified character in literature is dominated by one specific trait and is referred to as a flat character. The term round character usually denoted a persona with more complex and differentiated features” (2004:17). In other words, a flat character is a person or figure in the story who has no change in his/her roles and traits from the beginning until the end of the story, a person or figure still consistent in her/his role; while a round character is the opposite.



### **Madam Wu**

Madam Wu is the wife from Mr. Wu. She is described as a beautiful woman who has "...broad low forehead, yesterday stripped of its girlhood fringe, long eyes, delicate nose, the oval of cheeks and chin and the small red mouth, that morning very red" (1). She fulfills the role of traditional wife who must serve her husband, manage her house and give birth to baby. She is a good mother for her son and she can make her husband happy with her.

Nevertheless, Madam Wu is a smart woman too, she is unlike any other traditional wife (women). Madam Wu is wise mother and always fair in making decision. Everybody who lives in Wu's house loves her and respects her because of her softness and wisdom. Her son or all people in her house never feel that her decision is wrong. People were sure that her decision is the best way for all people who live in Wu's house. It can be seen from the quotation "But indeed in this house even the two sons' wives had no evil to speak. Those narrow hands which Madam Wu held so often lightly clasped on her lap, were firm and kind while they ruled" (3).

### **Mr. Wu**

Mr. Wu is the husband of Madam Wu. He is a good-looking man which makes Madam Wu is very proud of him. As the novel states, "The clear sunlight fell upon him as he stood, and she appreciated the picture it made of him-shining black hair, smooth golden skin, handsome lips, and large bold eyes" (79).

Mr. Wu is a husband who loves his wife and his mother. He is a funny man who often makes jokes without reluctant when communicate with his servant. He is also a friendly man who “listened to all his menservants told him and laughed at his joke, for the man was a clown and knew that his master liked to laugh” (79).

### **Liangmo**

Liangmo is the oldest son of Madam Wu. He is handsome and similar to his father’s nature. He is caring, friendly, and he honors his parents very much. He is an obedient man who never opposes what his parents want. His wife felt lucky to have a husband like him who is always spoiled her at home. It can be seen from the quotation below:

Liangmo, she held to be the handsomest and best of men [...]. His strong young body, his good temper, the sweetness of his ways, his endless kindness, his patience, his ready laughter, the way his lips met each other, the flatness of his cheeks... (1948:48).

### **Tsemo**

Tsemo is Liangmo’s younger brother. He has different characteristic from Liangmo, “He was stronger than Liangmo, keener, quicker, thin and sharp-tongued” (1948:49). Tsemo is aggressive, smart, and assertive in taking decision and “though he was younger than he, he had something of his mother’s calm, and this gave him

power over her storm and passion” (45). But if he has a problem, he can be very emotional and it will be shown in his face. As the novel states, “Tsemo himself paid no heed to what went on. He was an impatient young man...” (24). He does not give much attention to his wife because he has more enthusiasm in doing things that he thinks good for him.

### **Fengmo**

Fengmo is also one of Madam Wu’s son, but he is not very close to his mother. He is very different with both of his brother who gets influence characters from their parents. As the novel states:

He was the son whom, she knew herself, she least loved. He was willful and less amiable than liangmo or Tsemo, and less playful than little Yenmo. When he was small, he had preferred the company of servants to the company of the family, and she had thought was a sign of his inferiority (72).

He is a hard man who seldom gathers with his family member. He prefers to mingle with his servants. “He was hard to his core, and his core he locked even against himself” (306). He is an ambitious man, yet he does not have feelings for a woman and he never cares with love. Even when he gets married, he does not really love his wife.

### **Rulan**

Rulan is Tsemo's wife. She is a beautiful lady. Her style is like Shanghai women. "The young woman stood in the door way, tall and slender. Her straight long robe was pinched in at the waist after the half foreign fashion of Sanghai. Her bosom was flat. She was beautiful because of her high cheekbones" (43). She is a hard, smart and aggressive woman. She wants to solve all problems fastly without waiting someone who will do it. Beside she is smart and aggressive. She has bad attitude "...but speech was never necessary for this girl's comprehension of what was happening about her" (24).

### **Linyi**

Linyi is Meng's younger sister; and also Fengmo's wife. She is a pretty woman, and she is a modern woman who follows the new style of women at that time. She has short curled hairs which does not look like Chinese women who usually have long hairs. As the novel describes, "The child was modern, too modern, for her hair was cut to her shoulders and curled in the foreign fashion (23).

As a child, she is spoiled by her parents. It is one factor that makes her become dissident, likes to give order to other people, she is also easily angry with people. If she cannot get what she wants, she will be angry. Even she can be angry with her mother if she does not like her mother activities. For example, once, Linyi

pouts to her mother, she says: “I told you nobody does-it’s so old fashioned. I am always ashamed when you do it at home” (24).

### **Meng**

Meng is Liangmo’s wife. She is a woman who has no planning in her life and she does not have motivation to be smart and independent. She prefers to be fully obedient to her husband. Meng is a passive woman who will not take action if she has problem; and “Meng does nothing but cry” (44). She is also a lazy person. She loves to stay at home without doing anything. In her house, she has servant for her kitchen and babysitter for her baby.

Nevertheless, Meng is a beautiful woman. As described in the novel, “the one defect in [Meng’s] beauty was her hair, which tended to curl in spite of the fragrant wood oil with which she continually smoothed it” (19). Meng never has power to reject her husband’s request. She always does what her husband wants her to. Fortunately she has a healthy body for giving birth to baby as her husband dream. Thus, Liangmo is very grateful to his mother for she has chosen him a wife who is very beautiful and obedient.

### **Chiuming**

Chiuming is a woman who replaces Madam Wu’s position as Mr. Wu’s wife. She is a village girl who is not smart yet naturally- beautiful. She is described as “a

healthy, red-checked girl [...] with round childlike eyes, large and very black. Her black hair was coiled at her neck and fell over her forehead in a fringe, in the fashion of a country women” (64). As a woman from village, her feet are big because she never got any foot-binding from her mother. She does not have parent, hence she was raised by a single mother who has a son in the village. Chiuming is a shy person, yet she always obeys Madam Wu.

### **Madam Kang**

Madam Kang is Madam Wu’s close friend. They have been friend since they were children. They care to each other and they do not have any conflict. Madam Kang is a traditional wife who follows the tradition faithfully. She is not smart because she never got any education from her parents. After being married, she does not take any care upon her body anymore. As the effect, “she had grown fat in the same years during which madam Wu had remained exquisite” (7).

She has many children and also grandchildren in her house. Madam Kang is a good person who always thinks to make her husband happy. She also loves her family, and never be angry to her family or her servants. As the novel says, “there was none of the peace in madam Kang’s House that was here in this court. Around her fat, a good-natured person, was a continuous uproar of children and bondmaids and servants” (7).

### **Ying**

Ying is a private servant for Madam Wu. She already served Madam Wu before she is married. Before being married, Ying was a slim and beautiful woman. But after married a head cook from Wu's house, she was "had grown stout in twenty years of being married to the head cook" (1-2). Her marriage was arranged by Madam Wu because Madam Wu thinks that Ying is very suitable to her head cook in her house.

Ying is very faithfully to Madam Wu that it makes her husband feel that he is nothing for Ying if is compared to Madam Wu. Ying always defends her madam if there is someone who speaks bad things about Madam Wu. Ying always tries to make Madam Wu pleased and she does not like if there is someone who comes to Madam Wu's house and disturb when Madam Wu is having breakfast. In Wu's house, Ying wants to serve Madam Wu only. She does not want to serve other women in a big Wu house. In one occasion, Ying says, "I will not take care of any lady but you!" (27).

### **Brother Andre (priest)**

Brother Andre is a priest/pastor. He is a foreigner who comes from Venice. He is a big man who looks like a giant and has so many body hairs in his hand, foot, and also in his face. He is described as a man who "was dark-skinned, and his large dark eyes lay very clear and sad in their deep sockets. His hair was neither short nor

long, and it curled slightly. He wore a beard, and the hair of it was black and fine. In this dark beard his lips showed with unusual redness” (114).

Brother Andre is a person who is very care of his environment. He does not like to see people in problem or torment. He always helps people who need his help. He never make different between rich or poor people. He helps people from all classes. He loves children and he has an adopted child. He is a smart person who knows many things and he always willing to share his knowledge to other people. because of his kindness, people respect him though he is not a Chinese.

## 2.2 Plot

According to Klarer, “Plot is the logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original situation as presented as the outset of the narrative” (2004:15). It means that, plot is the sequence in which a story is told. The plot in the story can change based on the story situation as the author who wants it to be. In the plot, there are four sub divisions: the first is exposition, the second is rising action, the third is climax and the fourth is falling action.

### Exposition

“The exposition or presentation of the initial situation is disturbed by a complication or conflict which produces suspense and eventually leads to a climax,



crisis, or turning point” (Klarer, 2004:15). It means that exposition gives initial description to the readers so that they can lead to the next sequence.

In the beginning of the story, the author describes the condition of Madam Wu as the main character. In the past when Madam Wu was twentieth years old, her marriage with Mr. Wu was arranged by their parents. Even though they did not know each other before the wedding, they had to obey their parents and married. Nevertheless, madam Wu tried to hold a happy life in the family.

### **Rising Action**

The tension in the story is rising when Madam Wu has her fortieth birthday. She made a decision that shocks everyone in the Wu’s house, especially her husband. In her fortieth birthday, she says that she wants to be separated from her husband.

There is a sexuality reason that makes her taking this decision. She does not want to serve her husband in sex anymore, because she is forty years old now. She feels that she cannot be pregnant anymore because it is very dangerous for a woman at that age. On the other hand, madam Wu has different desire from her husband. However, she also gives her husband a choice to take another young woman to serve him in his old life. But in this case, Madam Wu will choose the woman who can serve her husband well, a woman who acknowledges her position well in the house of Wu. After considering it for a while, Mr. Wu grants his wife wish and takes a girl named Chiuming as his second wife.

### **Climax**

The climax in this story is when Chiuming tries to kill herself. It is because she was pregnant, but she does not feel happy about it. Chiuming feels like she never gets enough attention from Mr. Wu. During Chiuming's pregnancy, Mr. Wu prefers to go to brothel to amuse himself with the ladies in that place. He never cares about Chiuming who is pregnant of his child. Chiuming feels more hopeless when she knows that she is pregnant of a baby girl. In China, female is less-wanted by their parents, because they think that female cannot be an heir to the family. In addition, a female baby cannot raise their mother position at the house. To have a female baby is a kind of disaster for her. This eventually makes her feel worse and finally makes her committed suicide. And this act has brought terrible consequence to Wu's family.

### **Falling Action**

The falling action is when Madam Wu succeeds to arrange her son's marriage with her friend's daughter. Even though she must face so many problems in arranging that marriage, she manages to complete it. As madam Wu is aware of the changing in the society due to modernization, she sends her son and her daughter in law to learn English from Brother Andre. Brother Andre is a priest who came from other country. Whenever her son and daughter in law study, Madam Wu also tries to deepen her knowledge. By observing and hearing the lesson that Brother Andre gives to her son and daughter in law, madam Wu learn for herself.

### 2.3 Setting

As Klarer states, "Setting is another aspect traditionally included in analysis of prose fiction, and it is relevant to discussions of other genres, too. The term "setting" denote the location, historical period, and social surrounding in which the action of a text develops (2004:24). From the setting, the reader can have the imaginary picture of the physical and social environment in which the story takes place.

In the novel Pavilion of Women written by Pearl S Buck, it can be known that the setting is in China in the early twentieth century. The house of Wu's family is used as the central location in the novel. This house is surrounded by a tall big wall which covers the house. Beside the house of Wu, the setting also happened in the house of Madam Kang that is visited by Madam Wu. The social setting is a traditional Chinese society which still believes in patriarchy.

### 2.4 Theme

Theme is main idea of the author in a fiction. According to Abrams, Theme is "a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader." (1999:170).

The novel Pavilion of Women by Pearl S Buck describes the condition of Chinese women who are unhappy in their marriage and their struggle to reach for their freedom as women. There are so many limitations for Chinese women to be

creative or to be educated. The tradition in China gives many limitations for women, unlike for men. As married women, they must stay at home, serve their husbands well, manage their house and give birth to baby. It means that tradition has been restraining women from their freedom. Hence it can be concluded that the theme of this novel is **the efforts of Chinese women to fight against the unfair treatment in their tradition.**

## 2.5 Point of View

According to Klarer in his book An Introduction to Literary Studies, “The term of point of view, or narrative perspective, characterize the way in which a text presents persons, event, and settings” (2004:20). It means that Point of view is the author’s ways when he/she narrated her/his story to the reader, and every author has different way in narrating the story.

In the novel Pavilion of Women, the writer finds that the author uses the third person point of view to narrate her story. It means that the author or the narrator does not take part in the story. She only describes and narrates the feeling and thoughts of the characters in the novel. In this case, the author does not as a character in the story but she is as a narrator who knows the whole detail of the story.

### CHAPTER III

#### WOMEN'S EFFORTS TO FIGHT AGAINST CHINESE PATRIARCHAL TRADITION IN PEARL S BUCK'S PAVILION OF WOMEN

In this chapter, the writer will discuss the main analysis upon the novel Pavilion of Women by Pearl S. Buck. The writer divides the analysis into two subchapters. In the first subchapter, the writer analyzes the oppression that is faced by Chinese women as seen in the novel. In the second subchapter, the writer analyzes the Chinese women's efforts to fight for their rights from the patriarchal oppression by Chinese tradition.

In this analysis, the writer uses feminist criticism proposed by Elaine Showalter which is known as Gynocriticism. Gynocriticism is a way of evaluating literary works which focuses on female writers and their thoughts. As stated in Literary Criticism, the aim of Gynocriticism is "to construct a female framework for analysis of women's literature to develop new models based on the study of female experience, rather than to adapt to male models and theories" (Bressler, 1994: 184). In other words, it is a concept used to analyze the experience of women that is shown in women's literary work.

In Gynocriticism, there are four models that can be used in analyzing. They are biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic and cultural models. In this analysis, the

writer uses the cultural model to see how Chinese tradition limits women's rights. In this case, culture acts as a kind of patriarchal system which discriminates women.

### 3.1 Oppression Faced by Chinese Women

Patriarchy is an assumption that men are superior to women. As Tyson expresses, "patriarchy is thus, by definition, sexist, which mean it promotes the belief that women are inferior to men" (2006: 85). Under patriarchy view, women are being powerless who cannot and should not be equal with men in all aspect. Hence, a patriarchal system will give men and women different limitations which are very contrast to each other. Furthermore, this limitation oppressed women's rights.

In China, the tradition is built under a patriarchal view. As the consequence, women are positioned under the men. Women are oppressed by a set of traditional rules which governed their roles and rights in the family and society. These oppressions appear in education, marriage, domestic roles and also sexual subordination.

Such patriarchal system which oppresses women in Chinese tradition can be seen in the novel Pavilion of Women. This novel takes setting in China of the early twentieth century, where women live under strict traditional rules. In Chinese tradition, men and women will be treated differently even since they are born.

In the novel Pavilion of Women, the writer finds several notable points that describe the discrimination faced by Chinese women. These discriminations come

from the family and the tradition that is based on patriarchal system in society. These discriminations include the tradition of foot binding, arranged marriage, limited education and wife obligation to serve husband and family.

### 3.1.1 Foot Binding

In China, Foot binding is a tradition that is aimed to shape women's feet to be beautiful. It is done by binding both feet with a long fabric. As explained in the article entitled Traditions of Foot Binding in China, "When a girl was about three years of age, most of her toes would be fractured and her feet bound tightly with linen strips to impede their growth. The ideal was to create a 3-inch "lotus foot" by limiting growth to just a few inches" (Dehoff, 2011). Three years old is such a young age, yet the tradition forces young Chinese girls to torture themselves by using a fastened bind strictly to shape their foot. What makes this tradition worse is the fact that the purpose of this torment is simply to make women become beautiful in men's perspective. As Dehoff explains, "The practice became so pervasive that a woman whose feet had not been bound would have difficulty finding a husband; most families demanded a woman with tiny feet when selecting a wife for their son." (2011). Other than being painful, this foot binding also limits women's freedom. When their feet are bound, they cannot move freely. They are also not allowed to play with their friends nor done other out-house activities because they must stay at home until the process of foot binding is finished.

According to historical accounts it was around 970 A.D., during the rule of Li Yu, when the custom began. The ruler's favorite consort, Yao-niang, performed a dance atop a golden lotus pedestal that had been specially built. She had wrapped her feet in long strips of silk cloth, much like a ballerina in toe shoes today. Li Yu was as overwhelmed with the beauty of her movement as she danced that other court maidens followed suit, and "Golden Lotus" became a euphemism for their delicately bound feet (Holman).

From the quotation can be seen that foot binding has been exist in China from long time ago. It begins when a Chinese girl performs a dance with her bound feet. It is very interesting as women at that time. It makes Chinese also wants to have feet like Golden Lotus that is interesting for men who will take a wife. It is a kind of claim for women to be a beautiful lady as men wants. But in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the tradition of foot binding does not follow by the society. It can be seen from the quotation below:

Foot binding remained a part of Chinese society well into the 20th century. The Manchu leaders of the Qing Dynasty (1644 to 1911) never adopted the custom, and tried with little success to stop its popularity. During the late 1800s reform-oriented scholars and western missionaries began speaking out against the brutal custom, yet it wasn't until the 1920s that change finally began to take hold. Intellectuals plucked the issue of foot binding from the realm of morals and aesthetics and remolded... (Holman)



In Pavilion of Women, Madam Wu also has experienced foot binding. This can be seen in the novel which says: “Madam Wu feet were a little narrowed then they might have been by nature. This was because many years ago when she had been child of five her mother had begun to bind them” (93). It suggests that Madam Wu’s family still follows Chinese tradition. Because of the foot binding she experienced, madam Wu feels tormented that she cannot do anything she wants. She cannot run, play with her friend, etc.

Another page of the novel states:

When the mother called the child to her one day and the child saw the long white bandages of cotton cloth she began to cry. She had seen all this happen to her older sister, that sister who had once run and played so joyfully and now sat all day silent over her embroidery, unwilling even to stand upon the sore bound feet (94).

From this quotation it can be seen that madam Wu was very afraid of foot binding since she saw her older sister doing it. Actually, she does not want to bind her feet like her sister, but her mother always forces her to do so. Her mother always says her father name as a reason for her to agree for foot binding. Finally she obeys her mother request. It was really painful for her, as if the blood stops moving in her veins. She felt that her childhood has been ruined because of this tradition. Actually, she really hates this condition, and she hopes that there is someone who can help her to

release this bound feet. She cries, but there are no people in her house who can help her to release the bound.

Nonetheless, all of Madam Wu wishes come true. Unpredictably, there is a person who brings her into freedom. The person is her father who finally comes back home from his journey. When her father arrives, he is very angry of his wife who binds his daughter's feet. It makes him debate his family members who still obey the old-tradition. This is told in another part of the novel, which is written:

When he came home she had forced herself to walk to him on those little feet. What joy was like to the joy that came next? Before she had time to see his face or to call his name, he had given a harsh cry and had lifted her in his arms. Take these bands from off the child's feet!" he had commended (94).

This quotation tells readers that madam Wu is lucky to have a father who has modern thinking, who eventually saves madam Wu from the torturing tradition of foot binding. Madam Wu's father thinks that foot binding is not important to be applied in his house because it will only be a torture for his daughter. For protecting his daughter, he opposes his family, including his father and mother in law as well as his wife.

### **3.1.2 Arranged Marriage**

Arranged marriage is one of the traditions that oppress Chinese women. Parents in China usually choose the spouses for their children. Arranged marriage is

oppressive to women because it makes them losing their rights to choose their own husband. Even if they have never met before hand and even if they do not love each other, they must obey to marry a man their parents have chosen. As stated in an article entitled Women in China: Interpreting the influences written by Susan Ho:

From the moment of birth, a woman would have to obey her father. Once she married, she had to obey her husband, and if her husband died she had to obey her son. In this sense, women had little power. Their parents arranged marriages for them, sold them off to strangers without their consent, bound their daughters' feet to conform to an oppressive standard of female beauty and improve their daughters' chances of marrying, and sometimes, in poor families, practiced female infanticide (2006:2).

In this novel, Madam Wu, Meng and Linyi are women who get their marriage arranged by their parents. Madam Wu marries her husband (Mr. Wu) without any love between them. She only follows her parent's request.

Parents have big influence in their children marriage. They choose the women for their sons based on their own opinion. Every child must obey their parents' choice for the sake of the family. As the novel say, "It now remains for the sake of our house to find you a wife who will give strength to your weakness" (75). Madam Wu, Meng and Linyi are women who become victims of this tradition.

When she becomes a mother, Madam Wu herself also arranges the marriage between Meng and her son Liangmo. After being married, a woman has domestic

obligations as a wife. She must follow her husband to his family's house and obey her husband as well as his family. Her obligation includes serving her husband, taking care of her children and her family member, as well as managing her house.

### 3.1.3 Discrimination in Getting Education

In Chinese tradition, women also do not get any formal education. They only get non-formal education from their mother, and it is mainly about how to be a good wife. As stated in a journal entitled Women in China: Interpreting the influences by Susan Ho, "Before the Industrial Revolution and Western influence, equal education was only a dream for women who were stuck as "ts'ai-nu" (accomplished and talented ladies). Such women were nothing more than a cultural decoration" (2006:6). It shows that for Chinese tradition, women were only a cultural decoration, to decorate the family by being beautiful and obedient to the parents, husband and the elders. Hence, even though the women have talent, they will not receive any education other than the education to fulfill their roles as mothers and housewives.

Another article entitled Women and Adult Literacy in China written by Sreemati Chakrabarti states that:

Women in traditional China were deprived of its benefits as it was primarily a male domain. While embroidery, stitching and various other household skills were given importance for women, skills in sports, martial arts and dance eluded them due to the cruel custom of foot-binding (1998).

From the quotation above, it can be seen that education and knowledge is not important for women. They only need a little knowledge to calculate their household budget and to manage their house. This is stated in one of the dialogue between madam Wu and her father in law, who says: “Yet I know that in my house you do not need so much intelligence-yes, a little is good so that you can keep accounts and watch servants and control your inferiors” (60-61).

In Chinese tradition, women may not be more intellectual than man. In the patriarchal society, men must be cleverer than women. Thus only men get good education from public school. In contrast, women do not have that chance, because the family thinks that domestic education is enough to teach women to be good wives. Even after Industrial Revolution and Western influence, the position of women in education is still below men. They do not get education more than men. At this time, only women from elite class can get formal education; but women from lower class such as farmer family do not have any chance for that. As Susan Ho says, “the urban elite had access to formal education for women” (2006:6).

In the novel *Pavilion of Women*, Rulan, Meng and Linyi are allowed to get formal education from her family. But Ciuming never get formal education because she is poor. Thus, Ciuming is simple and ignorant. She cannot read. It makes her to be a non-intellectual person who only knows to work in the farm to help her foster mother.

### **3.2 Women's Efforts to Fight against Chinese Patriarchal Tradition**

In this subchapter, the writer will describe how Chinese women struggle to free themselves from oppression in Chinese patriarchal tradition, as shown by Pearl S Buck Pavilion of Women. The writer will apply feminist criticism proposed by Elaine Showalter which is known as Gynocriticism. Since Gynocriticism focuses on women's experience and thought, the writer will highlight women characters efforts to fight against Chinese tradition for getting their right in life. This women's effort is then classified into several points; they are women's efforts to be free from serving husband and managing household, efforts for choosing marriage partner and also efforts for getting education.

#### **3.2.1 Women's Efforts to be Free from Serving Husband and Household**

Traditionally, serving husband and managing household is an obligation for married women. However, when this obligation makes women lose their rights, women should do something about it. The novel tells that madam Wu is a woman whose marriage is arranged by her parents. Madam Wu was educated and perform as a good wife who serves her family. Nevertheless, there are some treatments in the family that oppress her rights as a woman.

Chinese tradition believes that after getting married, a woman must move to her husband's family's house. The Hays explains, "when women got married they were no longer considered part of the family in which they were born. Instead, they

became the possession of their husbands' family" (2008). It is told in the novel that actually Madam Wu never loves her husband because she was forced to marry him by her parents. Even though she knows nothing about him, but she has to leave her house to follow her husband.

For twenty-four years, Madam Wu has been serving her husband's sexual desire without love, taking care of her children and also managing her husband's family's house. Madam Wu suffers with all of wife's obligations which is seem to be an exploitation upon women. In her fortieth birthday, she has planned to retire from a wife's obligation for her husband. Madam Wu speaks to herself in the novel, she says: "Yesterday I was forty years old. I had long made up my mind that when that day came I would retire from my duties as a female and find someone for my lord who is young" (38-39).

The reason for her decision is because she is tired with her duty as a wife who cannot even satisfy her own desire. As a wife, she must do everything in her husband's house. On the other hand, she cannot involve herself in the things which are out of the household. Now she thinks that if she continues to serve her husband sexually, it may not be good if she gets pregnant again since she is already forty years old. She also thinks that it is already the time for her to do what she likes, to fulfill her desire for knowledge. However, to make herself safe and free from serving husband and household, she will find a woman who will be a second wife for Mr. Wu instead.

Madam Wu has been thinking hard to find the woman that will be replacing her position. She will not take arbitrary woman as second wife for Mr. Wu. The woman must know her position in her house, she also does not want her position truly change by that woman. The woman must be obedient to her, she could not have request that is screwy and claim her right as a second wife. To choose this kind of woman, Madam Wu needed help from matchmaker. As for the criteria for the second wife, it is stated that:

Clearly she should be someone very different from herself. She has to be young, yet not younger than the daughter-in-law, for that would bring trouble into the house. The proper age would be twenty-two, she must not be too well-educated, for Madam Wu herself had learning. She must not be modern[...] (35-36).

At the beginning, Mr. Wu rejected her supplication. He says, "I do not want another woman. I have never looked at another woman. You have been more beautiful than any woman I ever saw, and you are still more beautiful now than any woman. No, he said, I will not agree to your plan. What would my friend say?" (32). Yet, Madam Wu never gives up because she wants her freedom. She always tries to make her husband wants to receive this supplication. She always convinced her husband that it is a way to make them happy in their old time. With all of her attempt, she finally can make her husband agree with her plan. Her husband cannot reject her supplication any more. He also knows the decision that his wife has made for his



happiness. As Mr. Wu express himself, he says “I know you are so devilish, a woman that I could kill myself beating against your wish” (80).

Madam Wu does not only struggle for her freedom but also she wants to help other women to be free. Madam Wu gives explanation to her best friend madam Kang, that in their forty years, they are not safe to be pregnant again. But madam Kang has different thought with madam Wu. She has traditional viewed that she prefers to get pregnant rather than to see her husband with another woman in her house. This quotation shows madam Kang’s reaction to madam Wu’s idea of having a second wife in the family:

But how-for you? Madam Kang asked. She felt at this moment suddenly superior in her own relationship to Mr. Kang. Such a step would never have occurred to her, nor, she was sure, to him. A concubine always in the house, a member of the family, her children fighting with the other children, she contending with the first wife for the man—all this would be worse than flower house (10).

Madam Kang thinks that if she brings a concubine to her house, her house will be disordered. She does not want it to be happened to her family. She will not agree to the decision. But, she is still serving her husband and her house’s member. Madam Wu can only feel sympathy with her friend who is exploited by her own family member.

After all of her plan succeeded, madam Wu feels happy and free. She can do something based on her own will without worrying about other people. She can have time for herself. As the novel describes, she felt “indeed, restored to herself and almost as she had been as a girl. How strange and how pleasant it would be to lie down at night and know that she could sleep until morning, or if she were wakeful that she could be wakeful and not fear waking another! Her body was given back to her” (35). She has her own room (bedroom) to free herself from all of things that always absorbs her energy, so that she can do things that she cannot do during her marriage. Buck describes madam Wu’s feeling like in the following quotation:

Her weariness was hid somewhere in her innermost being, perhaps in her belly and in her womb. She had been giving life for twenty-four years, before the children were born and after they were born, and how they would themselves give birth to other children. Mother and grandmother, she had been absorbed in giving birth. Now it was over (42-43).

After her separation from Mr. Wu, Madam Wu tries to find her own life. At that point, Ying is aware that her mistress does not have attention anymore with her house. As it is written, “But Ying, who knew every breath of change in her mistress, knew, too, that she had no interest any more in the house” (186).

In her way, madam Wu Unconsciously feels that she loves Brother Andre, who is Fengmo’s English teacher. As a foreigner who came to China to serve the God, Brother Andre does not have any family in China. Madam Wu gets much

knowledge about the outside world from Brother Andre, and that makes her more enthusiastic to be free from her obligation as a wife. After she finds her true love, she forgets her obligation as a wife. Now, she only focuses on herself and on the new knowledge that she gets from Brother Andre. And this makes her feeling free and happy.

### 3.2.2 Woman's Effort from Choosing Marriage Partner

In China, marriage is important for women. Every woman dreams for a happy life in their marriage. But not all of marriage life will be happy because of the marriage matching tradition. Marriage matching is a Chinese tradition in which young women's marriage is arranged by their parents. Usually, the young women never know and never love her future husband before the wedding. This also happens in Pavilion of Women where there are many women whose marriages are arranged by their parents. However, many Chinese women who receive and some reject it.

As it is stated before, Madam Wu, Madam Kang, Meng and Linyi are women whose marriages are arranged by their parents. But, only Linyi has the courage to reject this arranged marriage. Madam Wu, Madam Kang, and Meng are women who still obey the tradition. They can only follow their parents' wish, even though it is not their wish. Madam Kang and Meng are passive women who are obedient to the rules that Chinese tradition has for women. They never try to struggle for their rights. They

feel satisfy with their current lives. They love to be a traditional wife who stays at home, taking care of the children, serving their husbands and family member.

Although Linyi is madam Kang's daughter, she has different perception with her mother about life. She is a modern woman who is smart and has her own way in life. She does not like the old tradition in her village. She loves modernization, and also she always has trouble with her mother who still keeps the old tradition. Linyi does not approve her mother's wish to marry Fengmo. Even though Fengmo is madam Wu's son who is her mother's best friend, Linyi does not want to marry Fengmo because she does not love him. Another reason she rejects her mother wish because she thinks Fengmo has an old fashioned thinking. Linyi says, "Fengmo has never been away to school. He has only grown up here in this house," (83).

Linyi does not like Fengmo, he is not modern like her. She also said that she has her own type of man who will be her husband. She wants a man who can speak English and have modern thinking. Linyi has so many requests to her mother if her mother still wants her to marry Fengmo. Other than wanting her husband to be able to speak English, Linyi also wants to have her own way to choose her husband. She says that she will marry Fengmo if she loves him. Thus, she wants to meet Fengmo before they got married, to see if he can speak English and he is loveable. As madam Kang says, "Linyi says she will marry Fengmo if she likes him after she has talked with him several times, and after he has learned enough English to speak it" (123).

Though to some people it is a kind of rebellion toward the marriage tradition, Linyi thinks that it does not matter if before marriage, they meet and know each other. It can be seen that Linyi tries to struggle for her rights to choose her marriage's partner based on her types and not only being obedient on her parent's choice. She does not want to follow the tradition that required children to marry a man without knowing him before hand. She feels that she has the right to choose the partner her life.

In this marriage matching, Madam Wu helps Linyi to get a man (her son) as her husband who has good education. Madam Wu sends her son to study with Andre as an English teacher and went to school of foreign country. Linyi plans to fight her right before the wedding as a way which can change the Chinese tradition of arranged marriage in Chinese culture. Where, women and men can meet each other before marriage and they love each other. Finally, Linyi still getting marriage with Fengmo after Fengmo completes her wishes.

### **3.2.3 Women's Efforts from Getting Knowledge**

As explained before, Madam Wu, Rulan, Linyi and Chiuming are smart women. In the Pavilion of Women, the writer finds that the Pearl S Buck describes the women characters as smarter than their husbands. For example, the fact that Madam Wu is smarter than Mr. Wu can be seen in this quotation: "Without his putting it into words, it was clear to her that Old Gentlemen knew that she was more

intelligent than his son..." (61). Another example which shows Rulan is smarter than her husband in English can be seen from the quotation below:

““What do you write?” she asked.

““I am practicing my English,” he said.

““Who teaches you?” she asked.

“He flushed. “Rulan,” he replied. She understood at once that he was ashamed, and so she said something else quickly.” (85).

Although patriarchal society tends to believe women are less-intellectual than men, but Buck shows that women can also be more intellectual than men. However, in Chinese society, education is considered not important for women. Chinese society always puts men as priority in education. As Hays states, “If a Chinese family only has enough money to educate one child, they almost always choose a son over a daughter” (2008).

This discrimination in education is based on the roles that the society gives to men and women. Men are considered as the center of the family. They are trusted by parents to manage the family’s assets. Meanwhile, women are only regarded as property that has no right to act on their own. Decision making is the job of men in the family, whereas women’s job is simply to obey and serve. That is why Chinese family thinks that education is important only for men, not for women.

When a woman is married, she does not have time to study for her own knowledge. She is burdened with household chores. This also happens in Madam

Wu's life after marriage. When she is married, she come into a family which does not need her intelligent. Her father in-law says that, in his house he does not need woman who is smart; he only needs a woman who has little cleverness to manage her household. This can be seen from the statement: "Yet I know that in my house you do not need so much intelligence—yes, a little is good so that you can keep accounts and watch servants and control your inferiors" (60-61).

Another example can be seen in the quotation below:

Your mind is an excellent one for a woman, he said at least. I would even say, my daughter, that your brains been inside the skull of a man, you could have sat for the Imperial Examination and passed them with honor and become thereby an official in the land. But your brain is not in a man skull. It is in a woman's skull. A woman's blood infuses it, a woman's heart beats through it, and it is circumscribed by what must be a woman's life (59-60).

This indicates that there is a strong discrimination between men and women in the family. Even though a woman is smarter, the family does not want her to be smart. In addition, women are limited from education. Chinese tradition does not provide equal rights and role for women. It is a fact that Chinese tradition is very oppressive toward women in term of education.

Furthermore, men in Chinese society justify this discrimination because they believe that the only thing that important is women's body. As madam Wu's father in law says in the novel,

[...] it is true that a woman's body is more important than her mind. She alone can create new human creatures. Were it not for her, the race of man would cease to exist. Into her body, as into a chalice, Heaven has put this gift. Her body therefore is inexpressibly precious to man. He is not fulfilled if she does not create. His is the seed, but she alone can bring it to flower and fruit in another being like himself (60).

From this quotation, it can be seen that Chinese people see woman only as a object of reproduction to produce babies for her husband. Women's role is to secure the continuity of the family's generations. In fact, Madam Wu's father in-law knew that Madam Wu is smarter than his son, he emphasizes to Madam Wu that she may not show her smarter-ness to her husband because it can cause her husband feels low and weak.

Madam Wu's father in law reminds her that there is no man who likes her wife having more intellectuality than him. As the old gentle man says in the novel, "There is no man who can endure woman's greater wisdom if she lives in his house and sleeps in his bed" (61-12). In Chinese tradition, also there are books that cannot be read by women, but it must be read by men when he is 18 years old. So when madam Wu is curious about the book, her father in law forbids her. It can be seen in this dialogue:

““These books, my child,” he had said to her in his grave way, “these not for you.”



“Because I am a woman?” she had asked.” (59).

Madam Wu is a woman who is always thirsty for knowledge. Beside managing her house, Madam Wu also usually adds her knowledge without being realized by her husband. She always helps her husband if he needs information about something. As the novel describes, “[Madam Wu] had been careful to keep him satisfied in all things. Did he feel a desire for knowledge concerning any matter to be found in books, she informed herself and then told him. Did he mention a curiosity concerning foreign things, she learned and let him know” (74). Unconsciously, it is a way for Madam Wu to add her knowledge about other things. Actually, Mr. Wu does not like his wife to read a book. But Madam Wu is very smart, so she reads with the reason for helping her husband. And thus she also gets profit for herself.

After she is separated from her husband, madam Wu has more opportunity to read book and add her knowledge. She can read book freely on her desire without any restriction. And now, she feels that she has been obedient to her father in-law for enough time and she does not need to obey his prohibition anymore. So she reads the books that her father in law forbids, in her library without being known by other people at home. As the novel tells, “Generation of men of the Wu house had read them, doubtless, but perhaps she was the first woman who had ever held them in her hand” (63). From this quotation, it can be seen that only Madam Wu has courage to read that books. There is no other woman in Madam Wu’s house who has courage to read that books, including her mother in-law.

Madam Wu has many ways to get education for herself. When Linyi requires Fengmo to study English, Madam Wu invites Brother Andre to teach her son. Madam Wu always comes to Brother Andre's class and she also learns what Fengmo learns from Brother Andre. Every time teaches, "Madam Wu and Fengmo listened, drinking in each word as though it was pure water (122) She longs to stay and hear the next lesson which Brother Andre would give, but she knew that Fengmo would not feel at ease if she stayed" (122-120). From this quotation, it can be seen that in her old age, Madam Wu still has appreciation to study. It shows that Madam Wu is very thirsty for knowledge. She wants to know what people know. She always wants to add her knowledge more and more than other people, including more than men's knowledge.

In this case, Madam Wu not only takes freedom for herself but she also helps her daughter-in-law to get freedom like her. She gives freedom for Rulan and Linyi. After Linyi marries Fengmo, Madam Wu allows Fengmo to study overseas. After Fengmo's departure, Madam Wu sends her daughter-in-law to study English with Brother Andre. When Linyi learns English from Brother Andre, Madam Wu is also in the class because she is very interested in studying, even more than Linyi. The novel tells that,

Because she did not trust Linyi she stayed by her that afternoon when Brother Andre came. Linyi must not be idle. Then, too, for the sake of honor she herself must supervise the hours this foreign priest was with her own daughter-in-law in her son's absence. She knew that Brother Andre was a soul, but who

else but her would believe the big body was only a husk... She listened to everything Brother Andre taught Linyi. But while the girl plodded unwillingly along the hard part of learning, Madam Wu mind flew ahead and wandered into a hundred bypaths of wonder (172).

Madam Wu is very enthusiastic to study that she requests Brother Andre to teach her after finishing teaching Linyi. She wants a private study with Brother Andre to add her knowledge about English. One afternoon when Brother Andre is putting his books together, madam Wu asks humbly, "Dare I ask you to take me, too, as your pupil?" and Brother Andre answers, "I am honored by the wish" (174-175). She has courage to ask it because she knows that Brother Andre is a good person. Brother Andre is happy to receive Madam Wu to be his student because Madam Wu is a smart woman who is enthusiastic to add her knowledge. This act of Madam Wu gets critique from members of Madam Wu's house. They think that Madam Wu does not care anymore with her house. Madam Wu is really enjoying in study. But she does not care anymore about her house because she thinks that there are many people there who can keep her house.

From the analyses, it can be said that Madam Wu is an educated woman who struggles for her right to get equality with men in getting knowledge. She rejects the perspective that men and women are different in quality. Here, Madam Wu proves that women can also more intelligent than men.

After Madam Wu's son (Tsemo) died, Madam Wu supports her daughter-in-law Rulan to build a school in a village near her house. Rulan invites Chiuming and Linyi to be teachers there. Even though Chiuming does not get formal education, but Rulan believes that Chiuming is a smart woman too. Chiuming is a village woman who does not get education. As a village child, she is not educated because she is needed to help her mother in farm. Yet Rulan wants to teach Chiuming reading and writing, and also other knowledge that she does not know. Fortunately, Chiuming is very interested to study.

The plan to build a school in village is a kind of way for them to get freedom from their family. They feel like they "are all locked behind these high walls. The family preys upon itself" (288). It can be seen that women actually want to be free without limitation from family. As an educated woman, Rulan wants to do something base on her own desire, such as she wants to teach people who are less educated. Madam Wu who is also a smart woman supports this idea because she also wants to provide education for children. Madam Wu thinks, "the children should be educated somehow. Andre would want them taught to read and write" (277). As her wishes, she wants to make other women to be clever and have power to get equal position in the society.

From the analysis, it can be concludes that between men and women there are not have differences. Men and women obligated to get formal education. There are not limitations for women to add their knowledge after they get married. It can be

seen from the enthusiasm of Madam Wu to get knowledge for herself in her marriage. It shows that women also have desire to add knowledge like men. Between men and women have similar brain and equality to get education.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

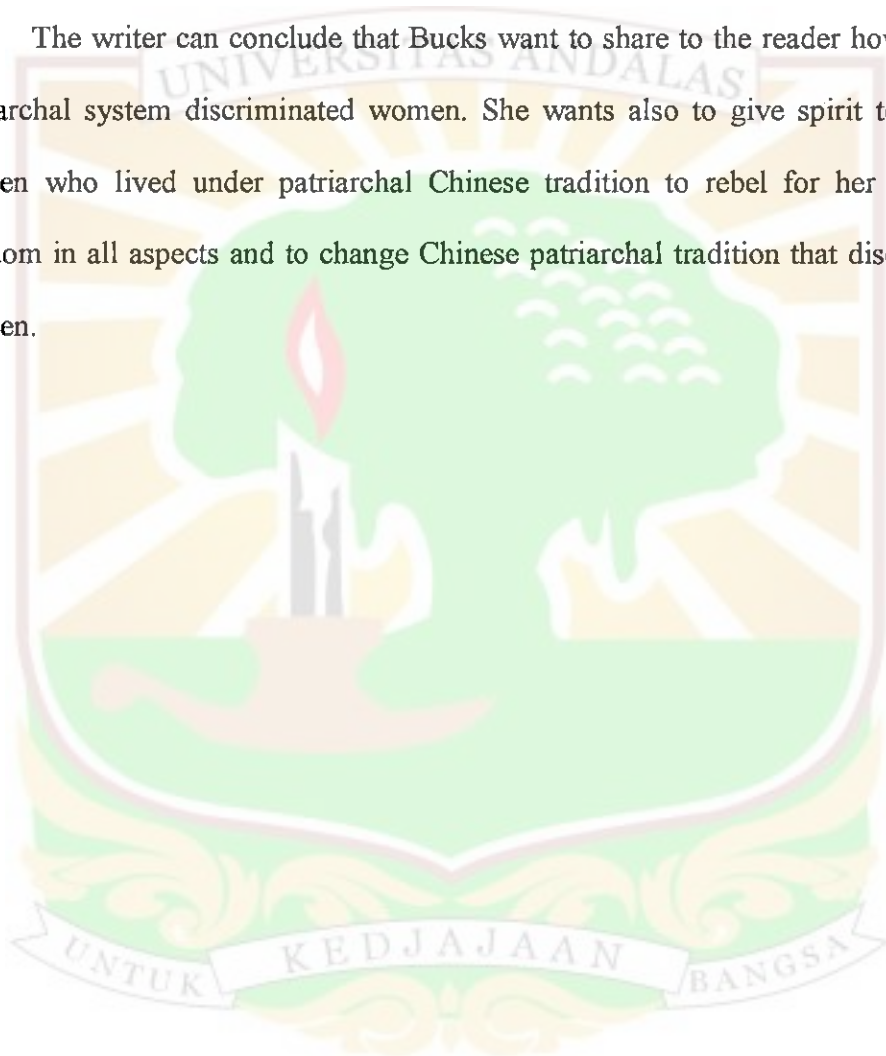
After analyzing Pearl S Buck's Pavilion of Women using Gynocriticism proposed by Elaine Showalter, the writer can conclude several ideas of the author related to feminist thoughts. In the novel, Buck describes the different characteristics of women in Chinese society that shows in her literary work. Chinese patriarchal tradition orders that women must be obedient in taking their roles as women. In old time tradition, every woman must obey to Chinese patriarchal tradition such as following foot binding from child, arranged marriage by parents, serving husband, household and to be a good wife after marriage, women also may not get formal education. It is a kind of women discrimination under patriarchal system in China. It is a reflection of Chinese society at that time.

In this analysis, the writer found some feminist point of view expressed by Pearl S Buck in her novel. In her three characters, Buck created new image of women who are not always obedient to the patriarchal system in Chinese tradition. Buck tries to describe how the three characters try to do some changes in Chinese patriarchal traditional. Buck wants to show how Chinese women have some efforts against Chinese patriarchal tradition for their right in life.

Buck explained that there are so many changes in Chinese patriarchal tradition where women do not have to follow foot binding. Women can be free from

serving her husband in old life. Women can choose their marriage partner based on her own types, and women also need to add their knowledge and getting formal education in their life.

The writer can conclude that Bucks want to share to the reader how Chinese patriarchal system discriminated women. She wants also to give spirit to Chinese women who lived under patriarchal Chinese tradition to rebel for her rights for freedom in all aspects and to change Chinese patriarchal tradition that discriminates women.



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## **SYNOPSIS PAVILION OF WOMEN BY PEARL S BUCK**

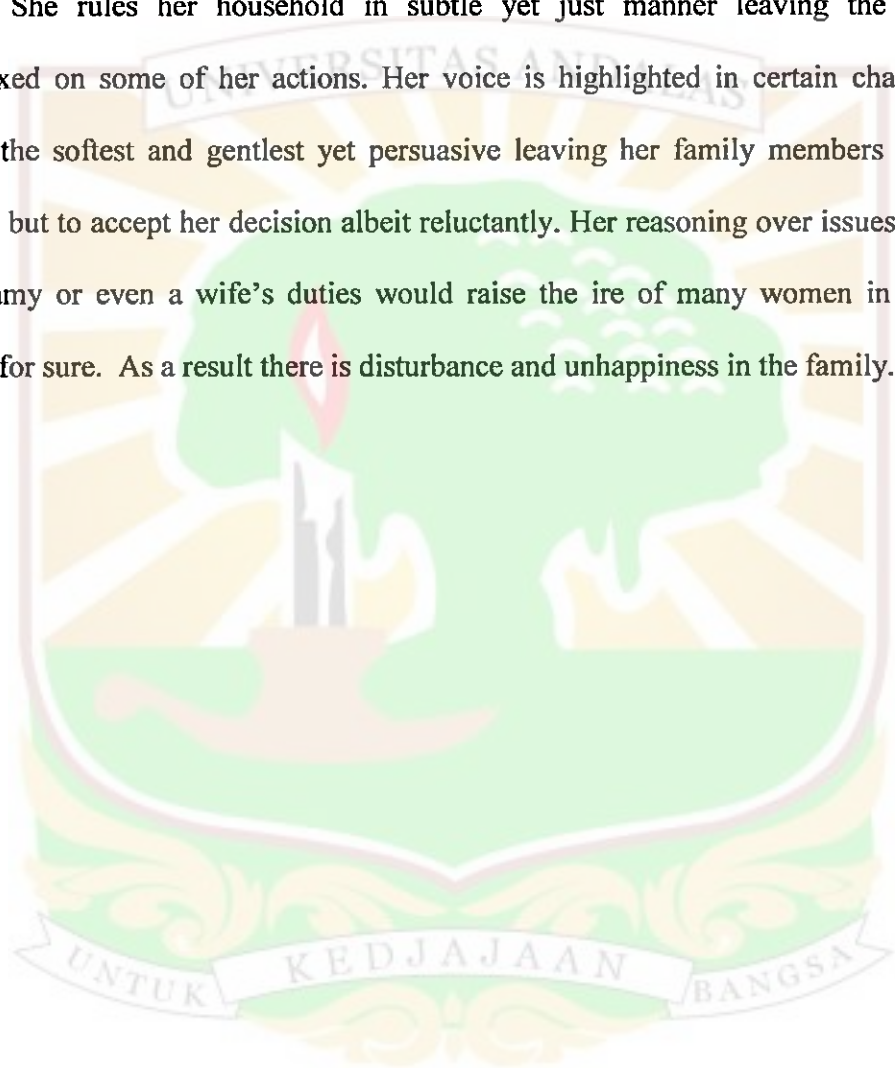
In this page, I will describe synopsis of Pavilion of Women by Pearl S Buck that is quoted from <http://silvermists.wordpress.com/>. Pavilion of Women, Set at the turn of a century in Old China, Pavilion of Women begins with the 40th birthday celebration of Aileen Wu, the matriarch of the honorable Wu household. On completion of this significant milestone, Madame Wu announces her decision to retire from married life and proposes introducing a concubine into the household to her family.

Waving aside their protests, Aileen executes her decision by bringing in Chi'uming, an orphaned girl into the house with a strong belief in her own wisdom. She also allows a foreign priest into the household with the intent of tutoring her son in foreign language. Her choices however result in the most dramatic consequences serving to create strain in the Wu household. At the same time, Aileen's interactions with the priest helps her realize and rectify her mistakes. But some of the changes that Aileen makes result in a tragedy, one that helps her redefine her destiny.

The emphasis is certainly on the women of a traditional household, their thoughts, actions and their influence on the male members of the family. The most puzzling and probably not so endearing character is the protagonist herself. Aileen with her unique mix of positive and negative traits dominates the story as its central theme. The author defines Aileen's personality as a slender woman with a soft

musical voice and a commanding presence but a somewhat unemotional and detached towards her family.

She rules her household in subtle yet just manner leaving the readers perplexed on some of her actions. Her voice is highlighted in certain chapters as being the softest and gentlest yet persuasive leaving her family members with no choice but to accept her decision albeit reluctantly. Her reasoning over issues such as polygamy or even a wife's duties would raise the ire of many women in today's world for sure. As a result there is disturbance and unhappiness in the family.



## **BIOGRAPHY OF PEARL S. BUCK**

In this page, I will describe biography of Pearl S Buck that is quoted from <http://www.wisegeek.com/>. Pearl S. Buck is the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Born on 26 June, 1892 as Pearl Comfort Sydenstricker to Southern Presbyterian missionaries, Buck spent most of her life in China, where she learned English as a second language, and returned to the United States only when entering college. Pearl S. Buck used her knowledge and experience of Chinese culture to create one of her best known works, *The Good Earth*. Her other works include *East Wind: West Wind*, *The Exile*, and *The Fighting Angels*. Buck wrote over 100 works of literature throughout her career.

Pearl S. Buck's Pulitzer-Prize winning novel, *The Good Earth*, had a significant impact upon how the American public viewed China and its people during the onset of World War II. About a farmer named Wang Lung, the novel accomplished what no journalistic work could have. It helped reduce the prevailing ethnocentrism and xenophobia towards the Chinese, because Wang Lung's values were universal. The novel was the story of a man's attempt to create a life he could be proud of while trying to fulfill his duties to his parents, wife, children, and society in general. Interwoven into the story were themes of failure, suffering, triumph, and

Pearl S. Buck endured a rather turbulent personal life, which included a divorce from her first husband. Her only biological child, Carol, from her first marriage, suffered from phenylketonuria (PKU), a genetic disorder that causes brain damage, and had to be institutionalized. Buck's second marriage, to her publisher Richard J. Walsh, was happier, and the couple adopted six children. Despite whether or not she was happy, Pearl S. Buck never relented in her personal pursuit to improve the world around her.

