

**THE SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CHINESE WOMEN
IN 19TH CENTURY IN LISA SEE'S
*SNOW FLOWER AND THE SECRET FAN***

THESIS

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**ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURE
THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF MALANG
2007**

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THESIS

**Presented to
The State Islamic University of Malang
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra***

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2007**

APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Ulifatun Nihayah's thesis entitled
The Social Discrimination against Chinese Women in 19th Century
in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and The Secret Fan*
has been approved by the thesis advisor
for further approval by the Board of Examiners.

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The Social Discrimination against Chinese Women in 19th Century
in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and The Secret Fan*
has been approved by the Board of Examiners
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MOTTO

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَّقَ الْبَاطِلُ
إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

(الاء سراء - ٨١)

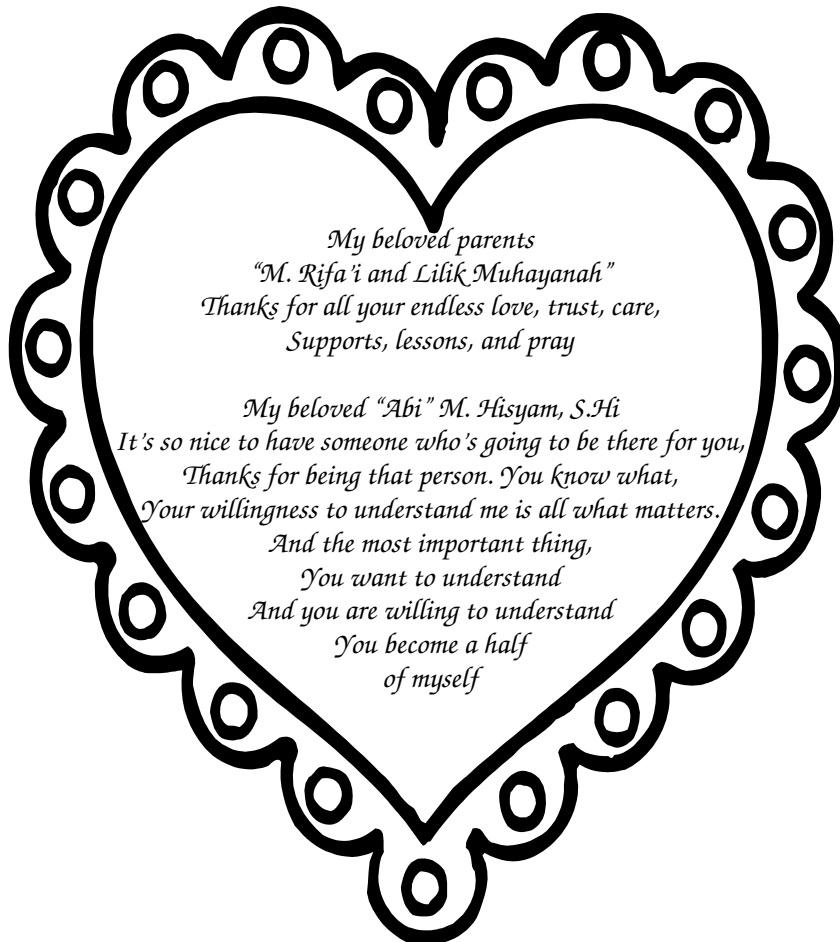
And say "truth has (now arrived) and falsehood perished."

For falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish

(Al-isra' 81)

DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to:



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The Researcher

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support and tears. You've taught me lots of things. I Love You*

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You know what, your willingness to understand me is all what matters
Thanks for everything; we'll reach our dream together and forever*

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*Knowledge and wisdom, bad and good experiences coloring my life,
with you is one simple wonderful thing, for what matters is not what
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ABSTRACT

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Key words: Social, Discrimination, Women, China, 19th Century

Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* novel was chosen as the object of the study for several reasons: First, this novel was written by the author who has a good reputation. Second, it's a monumental work. This is a heartbreaking story about women's live in 19th century. At that era, women, especially young girls, had to follow the rule of a painful tradition and culture. The problems of this study are based on the researcher's reasons in choosing this novel, they are: (1) what forms of social discrimination are faced by Chinese women in 19th century?, (2) what factors influence the social discrimination of Chinese women in 19th century?, and (3) to what extent does the novel reflect the real condition of Chinese women in 19th century as shown in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*?. This study is focused on the exploration of social discrimination of Chinese women in 19th century through their custom, condition, and social class. To analyze the data text related to this study, the researcher uses the concept of feminist literary criticism informed by feminist theory or by the politics of feminist more broadly. To analyze literary work from feminist aspect, the researcher read text as a woman (reading as a woman). It is more democratic and fair for men and women. Whereas, the data of this study are taken from the *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See and the data of Chinese women and the condition of China in 19th century. All the same, the writer plays an important role and spends great deals of time reading and understanding the novel. After analyzing the novel by organizing and separating the data from the novel, exploring the real phenomenon about social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century, and find out the similarities between the content of the novel and the real condition of China., than the researcher finds that actually the forms of social discrimination occur in the family, i.e. the practice of foot binding. This practice makes girls lose their right to obtain equal treatment and freedom to sons in family, and in marriage status finds that the aim of marriage for Chinese society is actually to bear sons. Besides, women must obey a certain costume in society. The factors that influence the social discrimination are caused by the social stratification; it places women into different position in social group, sex differences; makes women as the object of unequal treatment, and economic poverty which indirectly places women as the object of exploitation. And the kinds of cases in *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* are the portrait of life that really happened in 19th century China. The researcher expects this study may help the students of English Department to understand the literary criticism of social phenomena in the novel. And in accordance with this study, it is advisable to conduct a study on the psychological or sociological perspective.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature represents a language or people: culture and tradition. Literature introduces us to new worlds of experience. To some extent, literature can be an effective means to reflect, or change any social issues in any community around the word. The relation between literature and socio-historical events tends to be more acceptable today in terms of humanistic studies since none of human life aspects stands alone without any dependency on others. Scott states that, literature, as an artistic work, is not created in vacuum; it is the work not simply of a person, but an author fixed in time in space (1962: 123). Therefore, literature is important to us because it is universal speaks to the people and it affects them.

Many critics nowadays position literature in a more 'realistic' place. Fowler, for instance, argues that, although literature is presented in an imaginative way, it usually imitates, reflects, or at least describes the condition of the society in which it is produced (1987:135-136). Therefore everything occurs in the world can be reflected in literary work through the author's creativity, thought, emotion, aspiration and experience.

Literature, which contains some critical messages, usually appears in a society when it consists of unsettled condition in the society's social life (Nurgiyantoro, 2005: 331). Literary criticism is primarily concerned with discussing individual work of literature. Every work of literature has a generic

context. In addition, every work has a historical context: that is, it belongs to a particular historical period (Peck and Coyle, 1947: 1-2). Thus an approach used to elaborate the relation between literature and society considers literature as the social document and the real social picture (Wellek and Warren, 1993: 122).

Novel is one of literary genres which is usually concerned human being and often provides valuable message for people. It is true that what has been written in a novel is the mirror of human being's life; thus, it is also called a fictional or imaginative work (Pradopo, 1994: 194). Furthermore, novelist frequently tends to focus on the tension between individuals and society in which they live, presenting characters that they are at odds with that society (Peck and Coyle, 1986: 102). Hence, most novel are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies in which they find themselves.

For century after century, men's voice continued to articulate and determine the social role, culture, and personal significance of women. Women, she maintained, must stand up their rights and not allow their male dominated society to define what it means to be a woman, so that women not always discriminated. However, discrimination is more than distinction, it is action based on prejudice resulting in unfair treatment of people. Distinctions between people who are based just on individual value (such as personal achievement, skill or ability) are generally not considered socially discriminatory. Consequently, prohibitions against such discrimination generally will not prevent a government from acting in a legitimate and justifiable way based upon the value of an individual person.

In 19th century China, women, especially young girls, had to follow the rule of a painful tradition and culture. At the age of four, young girls would have her feet bound by their mother or by the female elders in the family who would wrap them with long of silk cloth which resembled bandages. The bandages were tightened over a period of many years until the toes were totally wrapped. The tradition stemmed from a need to establish a young girl's identity and elevation of status to ensure a good marriage (<http://www.museumnetwork.com/features> *The History of Foot binding*). Besides, where a woman's eligibility was judged by the shape and size of her feet, this was extraordinary good luck.

This novel explores how in status of marriage women are appreciated when they can give or bear a son, not daughter, because sons are the foundation of a woman's self. They give a woman her identity, as well as dignity, protection, and economic value. They create the link between her husband and his ancestors.

The marriage process in 19th century of China was taken care mainly by the parents. They were the ones who arranged the marriage for their children. There was no choice in the matter because this was the way marriage was handled. The Chinese felt that marriage was a family matter, and not something personal. Marriage was considered an economic or status transaction between two families.

Whereas elite standards of gender promoted as the ideal throughout Chinese society, in reality feminine behavior was shaped by economic class and social status. Among elite families, proper young women sequestered in the inner quarters, their chief company, the other women of the household. Rural women

who lived in farming communities regularly left their homes to tend fields or visit the market. Their economic situation made the division of their household into inner and outer (private and public) realms near impossible (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson10>).

China was a very poor country that had suffered from the civil war and war with Japan. The problem was how to develop the economy and also emancipate woman. The focus was on land reform to improve peasants' conditions and make sure woman got their share in the land, accompanied by laws to end forced marriage, concubinage, child-betrothal, and interference with the remarriage of widows (Rowbotham, 1992: 216).

For many years China was a feudal society (UNESCO, 1987: 1). The rules and public opinion would not allow women to have any behavior contrary to the feudal code. They advocated that women without talents were virtuous. Under this social condition women could not involve themselves in social activities and had to be confined of household chores and became appendages of their husband. It shows that Chinese women lost their right for equality with men.

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan is a brilliantly realistic journey back to an era of Chinese history that is as deeply moving as it is sorrowful. With the period detail and deep resonance of *Memoirs of a Geisha*, this lyrical and emotionally charged novel delves into one of the most mysterious of human relationships: female friendship. Beside, it is also a beautiful, heartbreaking story. A novel set in a remote Hunan province of 19th-century in China. Some girls were paired with *laotongs*, in emotional matches that lasted throughout their lives. They painted

letters on fans which is called *Nu Shu* (Women's Writing), embroidered messages on handkerchiefs, and composed stories, thereby reaching out of their isolation to share their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments.

Hence, Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* portrays Chinese social condition. Besides it is also a social criticism about women at that time. Feminism and most modern sociological theory maintain that the distinctions between men and women are, at least in part, socially constructed 'differences', (i.e. determined through history by specific human groups), rather than biologically determined, immutable conditions. Along with the development of gender and feminist discussion recently, the study of this injustice has been spread out in many subjects including literary work either written or audio visualized one. Kartini (in Surono, 1996: 74) says that many authors, through their work, have begun to write this issue. Many kinds of prose or fictions have been written to struggle for the equality and justice for woman.

On the other hand, this novel was written by the author who has a good reputation. She has ever gotten the Edgar Award nomination. She was served as a Los Angeles City Commissioner on the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Monument Authority. She was honored as National Woman of the Year by the Organization of Chinese American Women in 2001 and was also the recipient of the Chinese American Museum's History Makers Award in fall 2003. It is also a monumental work. This is a heartbreaking story about women's live in 19th century China. At that era, women, especially young girls, had to follow the rule of a painful tradition and culture.

Studies about the social life of Chinese women have much been conducted by some researchers. Sri Kartini, the student of the State Islamic University of Malang, has written a thesis entitled “A Study on Social Cultural Background of Female Character in Novel *San Pek Eng Tay* by Oey Kim Tiang”. Another study has also been conducted by Abdul Mukhid, a student of the State University of Malang. He wrote “The Position of Major Woman Character in Chinese Society Reflected in Novel *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck”. Although both works of Sri Kartini and Abdul Mukhid have the same topic as the researchers study, i.e. Chinese women in pre communist China (19th century), their emphasizes differ each other. This research is aimed at describing the phenomenon of social discrimination against Chinese women, its custom, condition, and social class.

Due to the above consideration that the researcher decides to conduct a study on "The Social Discrimination against Chinese Women in 19th Century Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*".

B. Statement of the Problem

Based on the above background of study, this researcher is intended to answer the following problems:

1. What forms of social discrimination are faced by Chinese women in 19th century as shown in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*?
2. What factors influence the social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century as shown in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret fan*?

3. To what extent does the novel reflect the real condition of Chinese women in 19th century?

C. Objectives of the Study

In relation to the previous statements of the problems, the objectives of this study are:

1. to describe the social discrimination faced by Chinese women in 19th century as reflected in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*.
2. to explore the factors that influences the social discrimination of Chinese women in 19th century as shown in the novel.
3. to find out the relationship between the content of the novel with the real condition of Chinese women in 19th century.

D. Scope and Limitation

In order that the study enables to answer the formulated problem appropriately, the researcher needs to emphasize its scope and limitation. This study is focused on the exploration of social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century as reflected in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. This attitude might appear in their custom, condition, and social class. Then, the researcher tries to find out the factors that influence the social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century.

Furthermore, as this study occupies the feminism approach which assumes that the content of the novel reflects the unfair or unequal treatment of Chinese

women's life, the researcher also reveals the relation between the structure of the novel which includes setting, character, and theme, and the socio-cultural background of Chinese society.

E. Significances of the Study

This study is significant to conduct due to its theoretical and practical function. Theoretically, this research is aimed at enriching the theoretical bases of literary studies. Besides, this study tries to implement one of literary theories, thus the researcher can reach the formulated objectives appropriately.

Furthermore the result of this study is expected to be a reference and alternative information for other researchers in conducting the similar research. However, this study still, needs to be followed and completed by other researcher with the same subject or object of the study.

F. Research Method

The research method in this section covers research design, data sources, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

1. Research Design

This study occupies a literary criticism. Literary criticism is usually regarded as the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary work. Criticisms as an academic activity express the reader's sense of what is happening in a text (Peck and Coyle, 1947: 149). The elements of the literary work are analyzed,

investigated, criticized one by one, and classified in accordance with literary theories (Pradopo, 1994: 11).

To analyze the data, the researcher applies *feminist literary criticism* to criticize the literary work it is valued as work which consists of esthetical, ethical, and regional aspects which are related to feminist perspective, such as the position of women in family and society and the way men control women in every aspect of life. And the theory employed in this study is reading as a woman. This theory is trying to make assumption that the critical reader who will make the evaluation to the meaning of the text. Then, the researcher correlate the content of the story with the theory in the feminist literary criticism.

2. Data Sources

The data of this study are classified into two. The first are primary data, that is, the literary work itself, i.e. Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* published by Random House in New York 2005, which content 350 pages. The secondary one are taken from the data about the Chinese women and the condition of China in 19th century.

3. Research Instrument

Research instrument is very important to obtain the result of the study. It is a set of methods which are used to collect the data. The writer is the main instrument of the study. Besides, the writer plays an important role and spends

great deals of time reading and understanding the novel. Then, the writer analyzed the data in accordance with the problems of the study.

4. Data Collection

The data in this research are taken from Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* which is related to a phenomenon of social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century. Since the data are in the form of words, phrases, and sentences within the novel, detailed reading, and deep understanding are the most appropriate data collection techniques in this study. These techniques have both comprehensive and interpretative aspects since they are aimed at finding the characteristics and elements of the novel based on the subject of the research. Then, the researcher finds the references that support the primary data, i.e. data about Chinese women and the condition of China in 19th century from any related text books.

The next step is that the researcher concentrates on the phenomenon which mainly reflects the form of social discrimination against women in the 19th century China. After that, the researcher highlights those required data. The data are, then used in the process of data analysis to answer the formulated problem.

5. Data Analysis

In this study, the processes of data analysis include the following steps: organizing and separating the data from the novel, exploring the real phenomenon about social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century, and find out

the similarities between the content of the novel and the real condition of China. Such steps will finally bridge the researcher's effort to give a critical judgment whether or not the novel reflects the real condition of women in 19th century China. The last step is drawing the conclusion and rechecking if the conclusion is appropriate enough to answer the stated problems.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid a different perception between the readers and the researcher in understanding this study, it is important to give some operational definitions of the key terms applied in the study. Definitions provided are as follows:

1. *Discrimination* means to perceive distinctions among phenomena or to be selective in one's judgment. The term is derived from the Latin *discriminatio*. Discrimination, in its sociological meaning, involves highly complex social processes. To discriminate socially is to make a distinction between people on the basis of class or category without regard to individual merit. An example of social discrimination is sex and gender discrimination (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1992: 498, [http:// www.wiki.org](http://www.wiki.org)).
2. *Nu Shu* is a secret written phonetic code among Chinese women. It can be used to write letters, songs, autobiographies, lesson on womanly duties, prayers to the goddess, and of course popular story. It can be written with brush and ink on paper or on a fan; it can be embroidered onto a handkerchief or woven into cloth. It can and should be sung before an audience of other women and girls, but it can also be something that is read and treasured alone.

But the most important rules are two: men must never know that it exists, and men must not touch it in any form (*SFSF*, page 30).

3. *Laotong* is intimate friends in old same. It involves two girls from different area or village and lasts their entire lives. A *laotong* match is a good marriage and its relation is made by choice for the purpose of emotional companionship and eternal fidelity (*SFSF*, page).
4. *Chinese Women* is a group of female, which are born, live, and follow the tradition or culture in China.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher puts some theories related to the problems of the study to support her thesis. In order to obtain the related literature, the researcher reads some books to support the data, theory and statements applied in the thesis. The followings are some descriptions which are related to the topic of the study.

A. The Concept of Feminism

Feminism is a collection of social theories, political movements, and moral philosophies, largely motivated by or concerned with experience of women. Most feminism are especially concerned with social, political, and economic inequality between men and women (in the context of being to disadvantage women); some have argued that gendered and sexed identities, such as “man” and “woman”, are socially constructed.

However, feminists believe that women are oppressed due to their sex based on the dominant ideology of patriarchy. Ridding society of patriarchy will result in liberation for women, men, minorities, and gays. Patriarchy is the system which oppresses women through its social, economic, and political institutions. Throughout history men have had greater power in both public and private spheres. To maintain this power, men have created boundaries and obstacles for

women, thus making it harder for women to hold power. There is an equal access to power (Suharto, 2000: 65).

Feminists differ over the sources of inequality, how to attain equality, and the extent to which gender and gender-based identities should be questioned and critiqued. In simple terms, feminist is the belief in social, political, and economic equality of the sexes, and the movement organized around the belief that gender should not be the pre-determinant factor shaping a person's social identity, or socio-political or economic rights. Feminist became an organized movement in the 19th century as people increasingly came to believe that women were being treated unfairly. The feminist movement was rooted in the progressive movement and especially in the reform movement of the 19th century.

Today, there are as many definitions, depend on a number of factors including ones own believes, history and culture. Makhfudlo (in Grimshaw) believes that:

“Feminism is a response to the belief that women have been oppressed and unjustly treated, and sometimes, also believes that they are available to them more than to men in certain recourse for developing a critique of the damaging and destructive aspects of human instruction and social relationship, and for tracing the link between these things and subordination of women to men” (1986: 21).

There are many definitions stated by experts about feminism. The main purpose behind it has the same perspective, i.e. to change the degrading view of women so that all women will realize that they are not a significant other, but that each woman is a valuable person possessing the same privileges and rights as everyman.

B. Feminist Literary Criticism

Following the feminism development, women started having consciousness to make their rights in every aspect of life equal as men. Even feminists believe that science was also dominated by men and used to oppress them. So, they try to escape women from every kind of oppression and boundaries in science domain. One of the effort is to create a special discourse of women called gender studies or women studies (Djajanegara, 2000: 16).

Women studies emphasize the study in many topics about women. It includes literary criticism. According to Elaine Showalter, most literary forms have not been touching women's writer for centuries in American literary history. Therefore, the first activity in doing feminist literary criticism is to dig, investigate, and evaluate women's literature for long time (Djajanegara, 2000: 18).

Literary criticism which focuses on feminist perspective is one of literary theories. It is called feminist literary criticism. To investigate female characters in a literary work is difficult, because feminist literary criticism as one of literary theories has to be consistent to the previous theory of literature in order to prevent the contradiction among the theories.

Seen negatively, feminist literary criticism might seem only to be concerned demonstrating that literature is sexist in the portrayal of women, or with showing how texts reveal the injustices of male society where women are regarded as inferior. This, however, is a very limited view of a feminist approach. One of the real achievements of feminist criticism has been to draw attention to

the fact gender and relationships between men and women are central theme in literature (Pack and Coyle, 1986: 152).

Times goes by, female writers not only change literary tradition but also do more. Most of the novels written in 19th century used the house as the central image, because, like their heroines, female writers were almost exclusively confined to the house. Their experiences were not as broad as their male counterparts because they were isolated especially from business life. Therefore, the novels displayed a highly static way of life. Until today, the development of feminist literary criticism is increasing. Many female writers were show up their ability in literary world not only in foreign country but also in Indonesia.

In turn, Annette Kolodny had given the definitions of feminist literary criticism. She states that feminist involves exposing the sexual stereotype of women, in both literature and literary criticism and, as well, demonstrating the inadequacy of established critical schools and methods to deal fairly or sensitively with work written by women (Kolodny in Djajanegara, 2000: 19).

Therefore, Endraswara (2003: 146-147) states that in further development, feminist literary discourse at least has four focuses:

1. To discover, examine, and measure the women's author in the past. The patriarchy culture needs to be expressed clearly.
2. To examine the literary work through feminist approach.
3. To express women and men's ideology, how they view about themselves in the real life.

4. To discover gynocritic aspect. It means to understand the creative process of feminism in the literary work; and
5. To examine feminist psychoanalysis, why women are more interested in softness and emotional things.

Endrsawara (2003: 149) states that, to analyze literary work from feminist aspect, the researcher reads text as a woman (reading as a woman). It is more democratic and not sides with men or women. Thus, the researcher will find *diegesis* and *mimesis*. *Diegesis* is all reported and told phenomena, while *mimesis* is practiced and shown thing. Both *diegesis* and *mimesis* are sequences of text that understood by reader.

Culler (Essays in *Feminist an Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, Ed. Warhol&Herndl.1991: 522) categorize three modes of reading as women, such as:

1. Where woman's experience is treated as a firm ground for interpretation, one swiftly discovers that this experience is not the sequence of thoughts present to the reader's consciousness as she moves through the text but a reading or interpretation of "woman's experience" her own and other's which can be set in a vital and productive relation to the text.
2. How to make it possible to read as a woman: the possibility of this fundamental experience induces an attempt to produce it
3. The appeal to experience is veiled but still there, as a reference to maternal rather than paternal relations or to woman's situation and experience of marginality, which may give rise to an altered mode of reading

For a woman to read as a woman is not to repeat identity or experience that is given but to play a role she constructs with reference to her identity as a woman.

Showalter notion of the hypothesis of a female reader marks the double off divided structure of “experience” in reader-oriented criticism. Much male response criticism conceals this structure in which experience is posited as a given yet deferred as something to be achieved by asserting that readers simply do in fact have a certain experience (Culler in *Essays Feminist an Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, Ed. Warhol&Herndl.1991: 513). This structure emerges explicitly in a good deal of feminist criticism which takes up the problem that women do not always read or have not always read as women: they have been alienated from an experience appropriate to their condition as women.

Amis and Jim (in Selden, 1989: 142) also state that, if we think positively in terms of reading as woman, we immediately see that for long time reading has assumed a male perspective and that there is a real difference of view when the experiences and values of women become central in the act of reading. It is clear that women can also, and once usually did, read as men and can adopt the dominant (male) reader position. This is made possible, despite the difference of female experience, because texts are produced in such a way that they construct the reader’s experience from a certain angle.

In order to read as a woman the reader has consciously to resist above construction. Being female therefore having female life experience does not mean

that one reads as woman. In order to bring into play female experience at all, women have to actively question the way in which texts construct them as readers.

According to Showalter (in Lodge, 1988: 332-334) there are two distinct modes of feminist criticism, and to conflate them (as most commentators do) is to remain permanently bemused by their theoretical potentialities:

1. Ideological; it is concerned with the feminist as reader and it is concerned with the feminist as *reader* and it offers feminist readings of texts which consider the images and stereotype of women in literature, the omissions and misconceptions about women in criticism, and woman-as-sign in semiotic systems.
2. The study of women *as writer* and its subjects are the history, styles, themes, genres, and structures of writer by women; the psychodynamics of female creativity; the trajectory of the individual or collective female career; and the evolution and laws of a female literary tradition.

Consequently, when we posit a woman reader, the result is an analogous appeal to experience: not to the experience of girl watching but to the experience of being watched, seen as a girl, restricted, marginalized.

D. The Elements of Novel

In this study, the discussion on the elements of novel is focused on this analysis are: the theme, character, and setting. Such elements are form of the basic step to analyze the novel and facilitate the researcher in analyzing through

feminist perspective, since this analysis will be correlated and connected between one into another.

1. Character

Characters are part of a broader pattern: they are members of a society, and the author's distinctive view of how people relate to society will be reflected in the representation of every character (Peck and Coyle, 1986: 105). Kenny, says that, character is not essential to fiction in the same way that plot is. Without plot, fiction is impossible, it is, on the other hand, possible for fiction to get by without what most of us would recognize as character (1996: 37). Croft and Cross also stated that characters are revealed in various ways such as description, dialogue, thoughts and feeling, action and reactions and also the use of imagery and symbols (1997: 74).

According to Stanton (in Nurgiantoro, 2005: 165) characters are all persons in a story, including their emotion, desire, attitude, morality etc. Abrams (in Nurgiantoro, 2005: 165) states that characters are the persons in dramatic or narrative work, endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say (dialogue), and what they do (action).

Characters in any story could be divided into many kinds. Based on *the role in the story*, characters are classified into major and minor character. Major character is the character that has a big role in a story and dominates the whole story. The major character is also called as central character or main character (Nurgiantoro, 2005: 176). Minor character is called the supporting character of

story. The frequencies of his or her presence are rarely and only appear when she or he has relation with the major character. It's less important than the major one.

Based on *the importance in the story*, characters are divided into protagonist and antagonist character. Protagonist is the hero or heroin in the story; usually someone who has good attitude, Antagonist is the character who opposes the protagonist.

Based on the *proportion to the fullness of character development*, characters are divided into flat and round character. Flat character is built around "a single idea or quality" and is presented in outline without much individualizing detail. The flat character is characterized by one or two traits. Round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is presented with subtle particularity; thus he is as difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and like most people, he is capable of surprising people.

Hence, the characters that appear in a fiction are just hollow characters that never appear in the real life. However, in some fictions, there appear certain historical figures in it. The harvest of historical figure influences the readers as if it is not an imaginative work but factual figure.

2. Setting

The element of fiction which reveals people the "where and when" of events is called setting. In other word, the term "setting" refers to the point in time and space at which the events of the plot occur (Kenny, 1996: 38). The theme is the time and place of the action in a literary work. It is important to the creation of

a complete work. As any other elements of fiction, setting is also related much to other elements. Setting helps people to determine characters' conflicts, aspirations, and destinies.

Connolly (in Koesnosoebroto, 1988: 79) state that setting is in a sense “the time, place, and concrete situation of narrative, the web of environment in which characters spin out their destinies”. In a good story, setting is so well integrated with plot and character that the reader is hardly aware of it.

Abrams (in Koesnosoebroto, 1988: 80) describes setting as the general locale and the historical time in which the action occurs in a narrative or dramatic work, while the setting of an episode or scene within a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place.

Furthermore, an author may be very specific and detailed about the setting if he wants to show the effects of a particular period in history or certain geographical or social condition on people. If he wants to make a comment about the human condition mankind in general, the setting may be deliberately vague. So that, the story takes on universal rather than limited significance.

3. Theme

Theme is the meaning the story releases; it may be the meaning the story discovers. Through theme people mean the necessary implications of the whole story, not a separable part of a story (Kenny, 1996: 91). The theme of a work is the large idea or concept it is dealing with. In order to grasp the theme of a work people have to stand back from the text and see what sort of general experience or

subject links all its detail together (Peck and Coyle, 1986: 141). The word theme, as used by most critics, also means something that can be derived from the story, and is in that sense rather like a moral. It is also not identical with the subject of the story (Kenney, 1996: 89). As the meaning or the main idea of a story, theme is related to any other intrinsic elements of literary work in question. All other elements of story should support the theme the writer wants to convey.

Every literary work has a theme in it, but the theme itself is not easy to be found. The theme must be interpreted through the story that consists of intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Nurgiantoro (1995: 74-75) argues that a theme could be called the meaning of the story when it has a relationship with other elements that build the story such as character, plot, setting etc.

A good author suggests his theme, or purpose of his story, through character, atmosphere, setting, plot, and style. Thus theme is a kind of composite statement which requires people's comprehension of numerous other elements (Hamalian and Karl in Koesnosoebroto, 1988: 78).

Theme is a reflection of human desire to make sense of experience. Meanwhile, Nurgiantoro (2005: 71) says that the theme of a literary work is always related to the meaning (experience) of life. It means that the author lets the readers see and feel the certain meaning of life by viewing it as he/she views through the work.

E. Discrimination

Discrimination, in its sociological meaning, involves highly complex social processes. The term derives from the Latin *discriminare*, which means to perceive distinctions among phenomena or to be selective in one's judgment (Encyclopedia of sociology, 1992: 498). The criteria, on which a distinction is based, however, may range from those widely accepted in a society as valid and legitimate to those generally regarded as invalid and inappropriate. In this part only the later sense will be emphasized, i.e. a discrimination which, according to Williams (1976: 39), exist to the degree that individuals of a given group who are otherwise formally qualified are not treated in conformity with the nominally universal institutionalized code. The broadcast sociological definitions of discrimination assume that racial minorities, women, and other historical targets have no inherent characteristics warranting inferior social outcomes.

Thus discrimination is not merely an isolated individual act but "a system of social relations" (Ontonovsky, 1970: 80) that produces inter group inequities in social outcomes. All inequalities are seen as a legacy of discrimination, whether proximal or distal, and as remedied social injustice.

To discriminate socially is to make a distinction between people on the basis of class or category without regard to individual merit. Examples of categories on which social discrimination is seen include race, religion, gender, weight, disability, ethnicity, height, employment circumstances, sexual orientation and age (From Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia - redirected from Social Discrimination. *The discrimination in the social science context*). Other social

discrimination are: gender discrimination, age discrimination, employment discrimination, language discrimination, and reverse discrimination. However this study only focuses on gender discrimination.

As acceptability of sexual orientation varies greatly from society to society, the degree to which discrimination is allowed by society also varies greatly. Discrimination based on sexual orientation is often exacerbated by frustration or anger brought about community changes that seem threatening to some members of society. In particular, changing gender roles and the increased equality afforded women in most societies is perceived as a threat to traditional patriarchal roles. Similarly, sexual minorities can also be viewed as a threat to gender roles that favor male power in a traditional social structure.

Seen in sociological perspective, then discrimination is considerably more intricate and entrenched than commonly thought. The complexity of discrimination presents major challenges to social scientific attempts to trace its impact. This complexity also makes impossible any one to one correspondence between perpetration and responsibility for remedy (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1992: 502).

Discrimination reflects the persistent application criteria that are arbitrary, irrelevant, or unfair by dominant standards, with the result that some persons receive an undue advantage and others, although equally qualified, suffer unjustified penalty. When comparing those who are advantaged with those who are disadvantaged, one can speak of discrimination as “the equal treatment of

equals". When only those who are being discriminated against are considered, it is also useful to reserve this phrase and to speak of the "equal treatment of unequal".

Discrimination covers *direct* and *indirect* discrimination. *Direct discrimination* occurs when a person is treated less favorably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. An example of direct discrimination is a job advert, which says "no disabled people need apply." However, in reality discrimination often takes more subtle forms. That's why indirect discrimination is also covered. And *indirect discrimination* occurs when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim. An example of indirect discrimination is requiring all people who apply for a certain job to sit a test in a particular language, even though that language is not necessary for the job. The test might exclude more people who have a different mother tongue (<http://www.wiki.org>).

This direct versus indirect distinction resembles the legal distinction between disparate treatment and disparate impact. While intentional direct discrimination may have triggered the causal chain, the original injury is often perpetuated and magnified by unwitting social actors. The application of intentionally criteria would deny that the continuing disadvantage is a legacy of discrimination (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1992: 499).

The discrimination against minorities is express in many areas of social life. Marden (1952: 42) classifies discrimination into four major areas:

1. Occupational discrimination. This signifies the categorical denial of employment to a member of given minority in certain occupation of social status levels of occupations. Denial of membership of unions and in occupational and professional associations also belongs here, even though “social” aspects are involved.
2. Civic discrimination. This covers the area of denial to minorities of equal participation in government, as the denial of right to vote or to hold office; and also the discriminatory administration of justice, as illustrated by lynching or by those more subtle situations where the formalities of legal justice in fact miscarry due to the prejudice of its administrators.
3. Public discrimination. This refers to the denial minorities of equal access to and equal treatment in such public places as restaurants, hospital, transportations, facilities, and places for recreation.
4. Social discrimination. In a sense all discrimination is “social”. But for the purpose at hand, “social” discrimination is restricted to those areas of social intercourse connoting close degrees of intimacy on planes of equality. Laws or other practices restricting marriage between dominant and minority persons fall under this heading. Like wise, all those practices which deny admission to formal or informal groups who primary purpose are either sociable or prestige defining illustrated “social” discrimination.

Social theories such as Egalitarianism claim that social equality should prevail. In some societies, including most developed countries, each individual's civil rights include the right to be free from government sponsored social discrimination. Egalitarianism is a political doctrine that holds that all people should be treated as equals from birth. Generally it applies to being held equal under the law, the church, and society at large. In actual practice, one may be considered an egalitarian in most areas listed above, even if not subscribing to equality in every possible area of individual difference. For example, one might support equal rights in race matters but not in gender issues, or vice versa (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egalitarianism>).

F. Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination is discrimination against a person or group on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Unfair discrimination usually follows the gender stereotyping held by a society. In Western societies while women are often discriminated against in the workplace, men are often discriminated against in the home and family environments. For instance after a divorce women receive primary custody of the children far more often than men, often based on the stereotype of the woman being the housewife and the man being the breadwinner (<http://www.wiki.org>. *From Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia* -redirected from Social Discrimination, main article: Sexism).

Gender discrimination, also known as sexual discrimination, is the practice of letting a person's sex unfairly become a factor when deciding who receives a job, promotion, or other employment benefit. It most often affects women who feel they have been unfairly discriminated against in favor of a man. But there have also been cases where males have claimed that reverse discrimination has occurred that is, the woman received unfairly favorable treatment at the expense of the man.

In the equality perspective, therefore, gender is regarded as an attribute that should not be significant in the distribution of social value or social rights. Equality is to be achieved through gender neutrality or androgyny. However, this can mean that the goal of equality is achieved through the assimilation of subordinated group (women, gay man) to the values, institution and life styles of dominant groups (men heterosexuals). In contrast to the androgyny or gender neutrality often implied by the equality perspective, those within 'the difference perspective' insist on the recognition of and valuing of the ways in which women are different from men (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004: 39).

Throughout the world gender discrimination and stereotyping limit the full development and participation of girls and young women as well as boys and young men. Until all girls receive the same opportunities as their male counterparts, their fundamental human rights are denied and the conditions for sustainable development are unfulfilled. It is vital for the future that girls and young women grow up to become leaders in their families and communities, and

increasingly in the workplace and in society

(http://worldnet.scout.org/scoutpax/en/8/8_genderdiscrimination_en).

Very often women are treated poorly and unjustly by society and have little opportunity or lack the political voice to change the situation. Similarly, men often feel pressure from society to be the breadwinners and are often not given the opportunity to help with bringing up children and lose self-confidence and self-esteem if they are out of work.

Historically in Western societies, men have had a higher social status and more extensive legal and political rights than women. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain, for example 'equal rights' feminists campaigned to extend to women the key rights and privileges (in relation to education, property, employment, the vote) previously enjoyed by men. By the late twentieth century, a range of legislation was in place (including the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act) that aimed to facilitate equality between women and men, through the prohibition of discriminatory practice (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2004: 37-38).

Discrimination against girls and women in the developing world is a devastating reality. It results in millions of individual tragedies, which add up to lost potential for entire countries. Studies show there is a direct link between a country's attitude toward women and its progress socially and economically. The status of women is central to the health of a society. If one part suffers, so does the whole. Tragically, female children are most defenseless against the trauma of gender discrimination. The following obstacles are stark examples of what girls' worldwide face. But the good news is that new generations of girls represent the

most promising source of change for women and men in the developing world today (<http://www.childreninneed.com/magazine/gender.html>).

G. Women in Chinese Society in 19th Century

Talking about culture and custom in China cannot be separated from many Feudalistic norms. This norms force girls and women for three obedience: to their father before marriage, to their husband after marriage, and to their son after the death of their husband (UNESCO, 1987:1). The role and public opinion does not allow women to have any behavior contrary to the feudal code. They advocate those women without talents were virtuous woman. Under this social condition women could not involve themselves in social activities and have to be confined of household chores and become appendages of their husband (UNESCO,1987:2).

In such a society, the institution of marriage has been of surpassing important. Sons are indispensable in carrying on the family line and in maintaining the honors to ancestors that failure to have them is regarded as a major offence against filial piety. Without sons the rites to parents cannot be continued and not only will the living be disgraced, but the spirits of the dead, deprived of such service, will be in mystery (Latourette, 1957: 670).

Sons are responsible for continuing a family line and honoring the ancestors. Mating couple is the concern of the elders of a family. Betrothals were arranged by the head or other members of the family, or perhaps the eldest brother, or consolation among the influential relatives. Generally the bride and the groom have no voice and chance see each other until the wedding day. Rarely has

it been made so since they are children. As a rule, there contact with provisions about property such as the gifts which are to pass between two families and the amount of furniture and clothing which the bride is to bring with her. In her case of the poor, usually the girl becomes her husband's home servant. Usually parents attempt to obtain a son from a wife from a family which is equal or superior in social standing and wealth (Latourette, 1957: 671).

Through marriage the bride becomes a member of her husband's family. For better or worse, a wife is linked with her husband's family. A husband may divorce a wife for certain reasons: bearing no son, neglecting his parents, having a shrewish tongue, committing theft, having jealousy, having an incurable disease, and committing adultery. On the other hand, a wife cannot divorce a husband. A man can only have one legal wife, but he may have concubines. Often-there jealousies between concubines and wives (Latourette, 1957: 672-673)

Therefore, Marriage is the destiny which is traditionally offered to woman by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being. The celibate woman is to be explained and defined with reference to marriage, whether she is frustrated, rebellious, or even indifferent in regard to that institution.

1. Discrimination against Chinese Women

Human rights violations in the Republic of China remain systematic and widespread. The Chinese government continues to suppress dissenting opinions and maintains political control over the legal system, resulting in an arbitrary and

sometimes abusive judicial regime. It detains individuals for exercising their rights to freedom of association, freedom of religion and freedom of expression, including the right to impart and receive information, and other basic rights.

In the nineteenth century, Chinese women had taken part in rebellion against foreign imperialism. In early twentieth century resistance erupted against the decaying Manchu dynasty, which was unable to prevent both the domination of local warlords and the penetration of foreign capital. Many young women, often from leading families, became involved in this republican movement (Rowbotham, 1992: 208).

Generally speaking, women in 19th-century China followed gender norms classed by Western scholars as Confucian or Neo-Confucian. These norms emphasized the family as the primary social unit and advocated the primacy of women in the domestic sphere (Missionary Journal, *Chinese Character*. <http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson10>. Accessed on 14 March 2007). Thus within the Chinese family, one's position in the hierarchy determined rank and responsibility. Daughters were expected to obey their parents' authority, assist their mothers in domestic tasks, and, in elite families, learn to read and write.

Social life knew no free mailing equality and respectability. After early childhood, boys and girls did not play together or have an opportunity to meet in any recognizable and proper way. Girl has been generally regarded less valuable than boy, and saying in common circulation appraise sons as infinitely preferable to daughter.

Girls were formerly given a type of education very different for those off

boys. Schools, however, were for boys. This was only natural, for they had as their primary objective preparation for the civil service examinations-to which girls were ineligible. The education of the daughter was given in the home, usually, if there were time, by mother, and consisted of such matters as the management of a household and the duties owed to a husband, a mother in-law, and others of the husband's relation (Latourette, 1957: 679).

The implementation of the universal right to education in the Republic China is marked by weak political will to adequately fund education, which disproportionately affects girls: due to remaining societal prejudices, girls are more likely to be withdrawn from school than boys. The lack of clear data disaggregated by gender, age and actual drop out rates by region also prevents a comprehensive assessment for how continued discrimination against women and girls in China is both a cause and consequence of their lack of access to education.

The one-child policy, in conjunction with the traditional preference for male children, has led to a resurgence of practices like female infanticide, concealment of female births and abandonment of female infants. Female children whose births are not registered do not have any legal existence and therefore may have difficulty going to school or receiving medical care or other state services. The overwhelming majorities of children in orphanages are female and mentally or physically handicapped (www.christusrex.org/www1/sdc/hr_facts.html).

After the revolution of 1911 a constitution was introduced and women began to press for the vote. The Chinese Suffragette Society was modeled on the Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union. It demanded education, the

abolition of foot binding, prohibition of concubine, child marriages, prostitution, the provision of social services for women in industry, improved status, and rights in marriage and the family along with political rights (Rowbotham, 1992: 209).

2. The Background of Chinese Society

In traditional society of china, it was composed of two strata: the lower stratum consisting of the vast peasantry, and the upper stratum of small minority of privileged groups (Chai, 1962; 61). However, Kartini (in Hidayat, 1984: 123) states that there are five strata in the structure of Chinese society: the highest level is a group of officials and scholars who have governmental position, while the lowest one are the servants, the players of theatre, the slaves and the beggars who have no house.

For centuries China was dependent upon agriculture. The government derives its revenues from land taxation. Officials and scholars were supported by taxes and rent paid by farmers. The agriculture and the status of farmers have been and will be determining factors, not only in the economic life of the country, but also in the social and political development.

3. The Background of Chinese Family

The most basic characteristic of Chinese institution is family. Moral and ethical ideas arise primarily in the family, and so does the fundamental function of social organization. The family of course, constitutes an outstanding feature of the life of every nation. Among Chinese, however, it has been emphasized more than

among most people. It has a leading part in economic life, social control, moral education, and government. In China there are five traditional social relationships: governmental, parental, conjugal, fraternal, and friendship. Out of these five relationships, three concerns on the family; the remaining two, though not familial relationship, can be conceived in terms of family. But these are only the major family relationships, and there were many more in ancient times (Chai, 1962: 74).

Ethical concepts have contributed to the strength of the family. Of the five relationships emphasized by traditional moral standards and reinforced by Confucianism, those between prince and minister, father and son, older brother and younger brother, husband and wife, and among friend are in the family. In such a society, the institution of marriage has been of surpassing importance.

Some urban families have largely direct contact with rural life, but the majorities have kept their root in the soil. The Chinese family seems to have been made possible largely by settled agriculture. Certainly it has owed much of its strength to the fact that Chinese economy is predominantly rural. It must not be thought that even the best Chinese families have escaped entirely vicissitudes which in other lands bring sorrow and disintegration (Latourette, 1957: 675).

Families with honorable records have died out through the vices and dissipation of younger members, financial and political reverses have come, and the storm of domestic or foreign war has uprooted, pauperized, and swept away the substantial elements of whole districts.

4. The Historical Background of Foot Binding

Binding the feet of women was a custom of the old of China. Its origin seems very uncertain. The requirement was in no sense religious but purely a matter of social convention. A woman without small feet was regarded as disagreed and it was impossible to get a desirable husband for her.

The tradition is thought to have begun in the 10th century during the Sung Dynasty. One of the rulers at the time was Li Yu, who observed a dance performance by his favorite consort in which she tied her feet to look like the new moon. This tradition caught on until the feet were bound so tightly that the women could no longer dance. The tradition also became popular outside the royal court and spread throughout China. In 1644, the Manchurians tried to ban foot binding, but never were able to enforce it. The Manchurian women never practiced foot binding. In 1911, the practice was banned by the New Republic and by the 1930s very few young girls had their feet bound (© 2000-2005 MuseumNetwork.com, Inc).

The processes of binding the feet was very painful, involving as it did the compression of those members by tight bandages into as small a compass as possible. Infection and gangrene might set in and the girl might even lose her life. When the binding had one completed, the pain largely ceased, but walking was difficult, especially for those with very small feet, and the general effect was upon the health deleterious. Weidegar writes (in Latourette, 1597: 680) "By old custom women are not permitted to walk out of the house. Their feet were bound very small, otherwise they could not get husband. They were forced into marriage, so

the marriage relation was embittered when they worked in factories they were oppressed by foreman”.

This foot binding practice was actually to adapt or imitate the fashion of the court, as once an empress had tiny feet; her attendance accordingly tied their feet to please her. Hence, on tiny feet women were the fashion sophistication and a relationship with the court. After the revolution, women were no longer as oppressed as they were under the role of the old society. In 1950, a new law gave them equality with man in marriage right, divorce, and the ownership of the property. In the traditional extended family, for instance three generation under one roof had gone, especially in the cities.

G. Previous Studies

Studies about the social life of Chinese women have much been conducted by some researchers. Sri Kartini, the student of the State Islamic University of Malang, has written a thesis entitled *A Study on Social Cultural Background of Female Character in Novel "San Pek Eng Tay"* by Oey Kim Tiang. Her research uses sociological approach and is aimed at revealing the differentiation of social life between Chinese male and female.

Another study has also been conducted by Abdul Mukhid, student of the State University of Malang. He views *The Position of Major Woman Character in Chinese Society Reflected in Novel "The Good Earth"* by Pearl S. Buck through feminist perspective. Although both works have the same topic of the study as that of the researcher, i.e. about Chinese women in the pre communist China (19th

century), their emphasizes differ each other. Sri Kartini describes the socio cultural background of Chinese women, their positions which are different from men. While Abdul Mukhid finds that the position of women described in Pearl S. Buck's *the Good Earth* indicates that women are considered inferior. Men are in a superior position to women.

Meanwhile, this research applies feminist criticism and aims at describing the phenomenon of social discrimination against Chinese women in 19th century, their custom, condition, and social class. The problem comes from the sex differences and the position where the children were born. Discrimination is not practiced only by individuals. In their daily operation, the institutions of society might systematically discriminate against the members of some groups in what is called *institutionalized discrimination*.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

It has been noted previously that this study is aimed at finding in the discrimination in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. It results than compare to the social phenomena related to Chinese women's culture, custom or tradition, so that the novel can be viewed as whether or not the reflection of the social condition of China.

Based on those objectives of the study, this chapter is divided into three main parts. In the first part; the researcher presents and analyzes the data collected from Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the secret Fan* reflecting the form of social discrimination. The data analysis on the factors that influence the social discrimination as portrayed in the novel is presented in the second part of this section. In the last part, the researcher compares and contrasts between the content of novel and the real social discrimination against women in China.

A. The Social Discrimination Faced by Chinese Women in the Novel

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan (2005) by Lisa See is a novel about social picture of Chinese women. Besides, it is also a brilliantly realistic journey back to an era of Chinese history that is as deeply moving as it is sorrowful. General setting of *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* takes places in China in the 19th century. There are two places in China used in this novel: the first place is Puwei, a village where Lily was born. This place is located in Yongming Country,

the country of Everlasting Brightness. It is not a prosperous village; therefore women have to work in the field. The second one is Tongkou, which is far bigger and more prosperous than Puwei.

In 19th century China, where women's eligibility is judged by the shape and size of their feet, this is extraordinary good luck. Lily (the female major character in this novel) has the power to make a good marriage and change the fortunes of her family. To prepare her new life, she must undergo the agonies of foot binding, learn *nu shu*, the famed secret women's writing, and make a very special friend (*laotong*) with Snow Flower. However, a bitter problem of fortune is about to change everything. The women condition at that time is discriminated in all of sectors of life.

Discrimination means to perceive distinctions among phenomena and involve highly complex social processes. The human right to freedom from discrimination is violated by the arbitrary difference in treatment. Within the novel, forms of social discrimination occur in the following areas:

1. In the Family

Family is a domestic group of people, or a number of domestic groups linked through descent (demonstrated or stipulated) from a common ancestor, marriage, or adoption. Above description girl/women position in the family refers to more situations, condition and also the status. In family, children formed their behavior, attitude, and emotion. Thus, family links between the society and

individual. All the same, someone's personality sited in the early adolescent and deeply influential for someone's personality is family, especially mother.

"Even now, after all these years, it is difficult for me to think about Mama and what I realized on that day. I saw so clearly that I was inconsequential to her. I was a third child, a second worthless girl, too little to waste time on until it looked like I would survive my milk years. She looked at me the way all mothers look at their daughters--as a temporary visitor who was another mouth to feed and a body to dress until I went to my husband's home. I was five, old enough to know I didn't deserve her attention, but suddenly I craved it. I longed for her to look at me and talk to me the way she did with Elder Brother. But even in that moment of my first truly deep desire, I was smart enough to know that Mama wouldn't want me to interrupt her during this busy time when so often she had scolded me for talking too loudly or had swatted at the air around me because I got in her way. Instead, I vowed to be like Elder Sister and helps as quietly and carefully as I could" (*SFSF*, page 13).

The portrayal above shows that Lily as a daughter loses her right to obtain equal treatment to son in her family. It is a custom in china that girls are expected to obey their parent's authority. Such condition reflects discrimination in the family and also excludes women's right that typically refers to freedom essentially processed by women and girls of all ages, this may be institutionalized or ignored and illegitimately suppressed by law or custom in Chinese society-in this case by Lily's family-thus, this condition reflects discrimination practiced by individuals in the family.

Another form of discrimination faced by Chinese women/girl in a family is shown in the following statement:

My mother had yet acknowledged that I was in the room. This is how it had been for as long as I could remember, but on that day I perceived and felt her disregard. Melancholy sank into me, whisking away the joy I had just felt with Aunt and Uncle, stunning me with its power (*SFSF*, page 12).

The existence of girl/woman is not wanted by her family. As a daughter, she feels that her mother never pays any attention for her. Mama always gives more attention to her brother. This becomes common condition that appears in China, where women are always different from men.

Further unequal treatment also occurs in the practice of foot binding. It is also becomes a painful tradition for girls. This act can be linked with marriage tradition in China, where the main point for practicing foot binding is to get the small feet. A perfect foot shall be shaped like the bud of lotus. A woman without small feet is regarded as disagreed and it is impossible to get a desirable husband for her. Such phenomenon is not applied to men, so that, women are truly discriminated.

Foot size will determine how marriageable woman is, it shows the obedience to natal family particularly to mother, because mother has important role in practicing foot binding. It also symbolizes the abilities in house learning. Furthermore, the tradition stems from a need to establish a young girl's identity and elevation of status to ensure a good marriage.

None of us slept that night, but what ever we thought we felt on the first day was twice as bad on the second. All three of us tried to rip our binding, but only Third Sister actually freed a foot. Mama beat her on her arms and legs, rewrapped the foot, and made her walk an extra ten rounds across the room as punishment. Over and over, Mama shook her roughly and demanded, "Do you want to become a little daughter-in-law? It's not too late. That future can be yours (*SFSF*, page 36).

The practice of foot binding is a painful tradition for girl. In this case Mama plays the active role. Under this condition Mama can be a woman without

tolerance and indifference. Here Lisa See reveals the horrors of foot binding (foot bent back, bones broken and reshaped), a young girl's innocent dreams of life in a new home mingled with fears of being married off to a stranger, and the obsession with bearing sons.

One day, as I made one of my trips across the room, I heard something crack. One of my toes had broken. I thought the sound was something internal to my own body, but it was so sharp that every one in the women's chamber heard it. My mother's eyes zeroed in on me. "Move! Progress is finally being made!" Walking, my whole body trembled. By nightfall the eight toes that needed to break and broken, but I was still made to walk. I felt my broken toes under the weight of every step I took, for they were loose in my shoes. The freshly created space where once there had been a joint was now a gelatinous infinity of torture. The freezing weather did not begin to numb the excruciating sensations that raged through my entire body" (*SFSF*, page 37).

Lily's mother binds the feet until they are totally wrapped. Lily can do nothing. She feels her feet harmful, and she is difficult to walk. Lily is only a 6 year old, girl who is forced to follow the society's custom.

Above all, Lily expected to obey her parent's authority and assists her mother in domestic tasks, she should learn to read and write. The education of the daughter is given in at home, usually if there is time, by mother, and consists of such matters as the management of a household and the duties owed to a husband, a mother in-law, and others of the husband's relation.

During the next year, my education in the upstairs women's chamber began in earnest, but already knew a lot. I knew that men rarely entered the women's chamber; it was for us alone, where we could do our work and share our thoughts. I knew I would spend almost my entire life in a room like that. I also knew the difference between nei—the inner realm of the home—and wai- the outer realm of men-lay at the very heart of Confucian society. Whether you are rich or poor, emperor or slave, the

domestic sphere is for women and the outside sphere is for men (*SFSF*, page 28).

The case clearly indicates that discrimination appears in women education given by their mother or old women in the family. All the same, there are no differences between high class and low class women. Besides, for all levels, women's life is different from men.

“ . . . In the early morning hours, the two of us—under Elder Sister's supervision—practiced new stitches. In the late morning, Mama taught me how to spin cotton; in the early afternoon, we switched to weaving. Beautiful Moon and her mother did the same lessons only in reserve. Late afternoons were devoted to the study of *nu shu*, with teaching us simple words with patience and great humor” (*SFSF*, page 46).

The sketch above shows that Lily and his cousin (Beautiful Moon) learn how to practice new stitches, study *nu shu*, spin the cotton etc. It appears that women education differs from men. The lessons given are all things related to women activities and household. This is unfair. Equality of access to all levels of education is crucial to empowering women and girls to participate in economic, social, and political life of their societies.

2. In Marriage Status

Marriage for women in 19th century China is surprisingly important. Young women will marry to a family of their parents' choice, leaving the home of their birth permanently. Once married, young wives will enjoy a position relative to their husband's place in the family. Here, as wife, Lily always subjects to her mother-in-law's authority as well as to her husband's command. She takes

management of the household when those duties are ceded by her mother-in-law, ensuring that she is well cared and that the finances remain in order.

For these reasons I have told the young women who have married into the Lu family, and the others I eventually reached through my teaching nu shu, that they should hurry to have a baby boy. Sons are the foundation of a woman's self. They give a woman her identity, as well as dignity, protection, and economic value. They create the link between her husband and his ancestors. This is the one accomplishment a man cannot achieve without the aid of his wife. Only she can guarantee the perpetuation of the family line, which, in turn, is the ultimate duty of every son. This is the supreme way he completes his filial duty, while sons are a woman's crowning glory. I had done all this and I was ecstatic (*SFSF*, page 198).

The situation above reflects that the aim of marriage for Chinese society is actually to bear son, because the birth of son will be a happy occasion for the entire household. Besides, it will guarantee not only the continuity of the family line, but also the insurance for both parents that they will be well-served in their elderly age and worshiped after their death.

Three days before my wedding, I began the ceremonies associated with the Day of Sorrow and Worry. I may have been brave and looking forward to my new life, but my body and soul were weak from hunger, because a bride is not allowed to eat for the final ten days of her wedding festivities. Do we follow this custom to make us sadder at leaving our families, to make us more yielding when we go to our husband's homes, or to make us appear more pure to our husbands? How can I know the answer . . . ? (*SFSF*, page 135).

The above case reflects how discrimination is applied by the society. The custom, which is endured by the society, is not exceptionally beneficial to women. As a Chinese woman, Lily must obey a certain custom. Lily is a victim of a painful custom. During her wedding day the tradition does not allow her to eat

until the final days of her wedding day. This act makes Lily wonderful. She does not know what it means because she should follow the custom without any reward for her.

The form of discrimination above is categorized into indirect discrimination because the practice of ceremonies disadvantages people on the ground of age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by legitimate aim.

B. The Factors Influenced the Social Discrimination against Chinese Women in the Novel

In this section, the researcher intends to analyze the factors which influence the social discrimination undergone Chinese women as portrayed in Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*.

There are several factors which influence the social discrimination in china such as in the form of the economic poverty, social stratification and sex differences. In primitive and traditional society, sex differences were often reflects unequal right and obligation, where women's position in various aspects is occupied lower than men's.

1. Social Stratification

Talking about the social stratification, people usually refer to unequal status between people or group in a society. In detail, determinant factors of social

stratification vary, such as: age dimension, gender, religion, race or ethnic, formal education, job, authority, status, housing and economy.

“A frightening thought began to formulate in my mind. Snow Flower had to be marrying out into a very low family. The question was, just how low?”

“Snow Flower seemed to read my thoughts. “Auntie did the best she could for me. I’m not marrying a farmer.”

That hurt a little, since my father was a farmer.

“He’s a merchant then?” A merchant would have a dishonorable profession, but he might be able to restore some of Snow Flower’s lost circumstances.

Waaa! This was the worst marriage possible! Snow Flower’s new husband would have some money, but what he did was unclean and disgusting (*SFSF*, page 160).

The above portrayal shows the social status in Chinese society. It can be categorized into two groups: a group of honored (upper stratum) or hesitated society and an ordinary group (lower stratum). The honored society will keep their prestige in society. It means that in some cases they are unwilling to enter or join the ordinary group to sustain their status. The honored society usually has exclusive life style, including in their daily social intercourse. It may be formed by controlled intercourse with low status group. But at this position Snow Flower will face a terrible life because of her husband’s low status.

But the influential quality for the establishment of social stratification is not the same, it depends on the development of society and the prevail of social context such as in the old period of China. Men are respected to have higher level than women, so that women got different education and treatment from men because the men had a primary objective to preparation for the civil service examinations to which women were ineligible.

The social stratification itself includes status and role. Status is often in contrast to social status. Status is a place or position of someone in a society which relates him/her with someone else in that group, or a place of a group before another group in a bigger scale.

I listened to Lady Lu's excuses, but I knew her reasons were far more base. Snow Flower's natal family was disgraced and she'd married a polluted man. My in-laws simply didn't want me to associate with her (*SFSF*, page: 205).

In Chinese society, women's status is determined by her marriage. When they marry an honor and wealth family, her status will also change. The statement above notes that in Chinese society someone's association is viewed from the status. Consequently, Lily's mother in-law forbids her to associate with Snow Flower because she is married to a man with dishonor status.

"Snow Flower's fate was preordained," my mother in-law went on, venturing closer to the truth, "and it does not meet yours in any way. Master Lu and I would look favorably on a daughter-in-law who decided to break contact with someone who is no longer a true old same. If you need companionship, I will remind you of the young married women in Tongkou to whom I introduced you" (*SFSF*, page: 205).

The previous phenomena bring a conclusive idea that someone's social status influences his/her position in different social group. Here Lily's status is different from her *laotong* Snow Flower. This condition changes their life, either in their daily life or in their relationship. Lily she only associates with girls in her group (in the same status).

When in a society the large dissimilar status occurs, the family will bequeath the status of each individual. In that case they have special right, as reflected in the following finding:

I was sure that my new married status to the best family in Tongkou would be persuasive, yet I could just as easily have been talking out of my behind, for surely my in-laws had no idea I was using their position in this manner (SFSF, page 166).

It shows that Lily's new marital status makes her get a good position in her society. She can do anything by employing her family's position. Thus she is convinced that her husband's family status will encourage the society to trust her.

. We couldn't go on this way, so I suggested that we move down stair to the kitchen, where we might warm ourselves by the brazier. Madame Wang and Snow Flower's mother deferred to me, showing me once again that I had power now (SFSF, page 168).

Lily's status makes her be respected by the society. It appears from the above condition, where madam Wang and her *laotong* Snow Flower obey her.

At first I was lucky, because I didn't have anything bad to report. When I become betrothed, I'd learned that my husband's uncle was a jinshin, the highest level of imperial scholar. The saying I had heard as a girl-"if one person becomes an official, then all of his family's dogs and cats go to heaven"-now become clear. . . ." (SFSF, page 197).

Someone's status might be measured from his/her job, education and science. At the same time, someone may have various positions in the society, but usually the conspicuous position is the most principle one. By seeing those

positions 'to whom it may concern', they are classified into strata or in a certain social class/stratum.

When my mother –in-law saw these, she said, "A mother must always be careful whom she chooses to let into her life. Your son's mother cannot associate with a butcher's wife. Filial women raise filial sons, and we expect you to obey our wishes." (SFSF, page 200).

It is apparent that actually someone's position in the society can be determined from the condition how and with whom they associate. It is reflected in how Lily's mother in law does not allow her to associate with her *laotong* Snow Flower because her husband is a merchant. For Chinese society, a merchant possesses dishonorable profession.

Above all, role is the dynamic aspect of status. It means that someone who carries out his/her obligations and rights conforms to their social position, so that she/he implements the role.

Women should not pass beyond the inner chambers in their thoughts or in their actions. I also understood that two Confucian ideals ruled our lives. The first was the Three Obedience: "When a girl, obey your father, when a wife, obey your husband; when a widow obey your son." The second was the Four Virtues, which delineate women's behavior, speech, carriage, and occupation: "Be chaste and yielding, calm, and upright in attitude; be quite and agreeable in words; be restrained and exquisite in movement; be perfect in handiwork and embroidery." If girls do not stray from these principles, they will grow into virtuous women (SFSF, page 29).

Women are always discriminated either by their society family. In every aspect of life, women's condition is distressed. As a woman, Lily must understand the role in his life.

Besides, there are cultures that view the human's life as a bad and sad thing. In the other hand, it can be offer someone to get on honored position in the society. Hence, the society oppresses women by implementing making criteria, which make women commit on the way of thinking and behavior to be good women. Women must realize that they are the objects of culture. Women do not have their own preferences for the society does not give them many choices of their lives.

“All I knew that foot binding would make me more marriageable and therefore bring me closer to the greatest love and greatest joy in a woman's life-a son. To that end, my goals was to achieve a pair of perfectly bound feet with seven distinct attributes: they should be small, narrow, straight, pointed, and arched, yet still fragrant and soft in texture. Of these requirements, length is more important. Seventh centimeters- about the length of a thumb- is the ideal. Shape comes next. A perfect foot should be shaped like the bud of lotus. It should be full and round at the heel, come to a point at the front, with all weight borne by the big toe alone. This mean that toes and arch of the food must be broken and bend under to meet the heel. Finally, the cleft formed by the forefoot and heel should be deep enough to hide a large cash piece perpendicularly within its folds. If I could attain all that, happiness would be my reward” (*SFSS*, page 31).

What Lily tells above is about the purpose of foot binding. To attain the happiness of her life in the future she must have small feet. Seven centimeter is an ideal size, but this does not totally guarantee that a woman can attain happiness. When the practice is wrong, this bind might endanger Lily. Besides, the feet might possibly the feet be broken.

Based on the above case, it can be assumed that the existence of custom in a certain family is does not always have benefit. It shows that discrimination is applied by the social system or institution, i.e. the society. Thus, society is a

system that has the role in social life. Society is a group of human beings that is distinguishable from other groups by mutual interest, characteristic relationship, shared institutions, and a common culture. The position more refers to status of someone itself and also situation or condition where someone should place in the proper place.

2. Economic Poverty

Human beings, with their innate character of the 'dislike to the unlike' tend to annihilate of others. By exploiting them since it indirectly places one group as the subject of exploitation (the superior) and the other as the object (the inferior).

The following phenomena reflect the women's position exploited by one member of family, that is the father.

“. . . –he thought he would sell me.”

“Not as a servant!”

“Worse. As a little daughter-in-law.”

“This had always been the most horrible thing I could imagine: not having your feet bound, being raised by strangers who had to be of such low morals that they didn't want a proper daughter-in-law, being treated lower than a servant. And now that I was married I understood the most terrible aspect o this life. You might nothing but a bit of bed business for any male who lived in the household.” (*SFSF*, page 157).

The previous phenomena bring a conclusive idea that because of the economic factor a group in family might do intolerant act. What is faced by Snow Flower reflects a condition that her family does not give any the safety for her. The family's worse condition motivates her father to sell her as a little daughter

in-law who has the lower position than a servant because the little daughter in-law does not have small feet.

Another fact is that, China depends upon agriculture. Therefore the agriculture and the status of farmer have been and will be the determining factor in Chinese economic life.

That year, Snow Flower came to stay with us for all of catching cool Breezes Festival, which takes place during the hottest time of year when the stores from the previous harvest are nearly gone and the new harvest is not yet ready. This means that married-in women, the lowest in any household, are sent back to their natal homes for days or sometimes week (*SFSF*, page: 105).

The statement indicates that most of Chinese societies are farmers. It leads to unstable economic condition because the citizens' income depends on the harvest. However, it is not the reason to consider women as the object of the economic factor. It shown in the above case that married women, who are in the lowest position in any household, gets an unequal treatment. They are sent back to their natal family to anticipate and limit the new family's outcome.

Lisa See also explores other cases that are related to the economic factor as reflected in the following statement:

The poorest girls don't have their feet bound at all. We know how they end up. They are either sold as servants or they become "little daughters-in-law"-big footed girls from unfortunate families who are given to other families to raise until they are old enough to bear children (*SFSF*, page: 19).

A woman without small feet is regarded as a disagreed person and it is impossible to get a desirable husband. In the case of poor, usually the girl

becomes the husband's home servant. Usually parents attempt to obtain son from a wife from a family which is equally social standing and wealth. So that, marriage is very important in Chinese society because the main point for marriage is bearing sons. Sons are responsible for continuing a family line.

3. Sex Differences

Another factor that influences social discrimination is about sexual differences. Essentially the difference between man and women is not a problem in such society except when it expresses injustice and imbalance because a certain sex has higher position over the other one.

Socially, sexual differences have been used to justify societies in which one sex or the other has been restricted to significantly inferior and secondary roles. While there are non-physical differences between men and women, there is a little agreement as to what those differences are.

. . . . "A wife who does not bear a son can always be replaced," she might say, though she hated with her entire soul her husband's concubines. Now when I looked around the women's chamber, I saw jealousy and smoldering resentment, but what could the other women do but wait and see if another son come out of my body? (*SFSF*, page 222).

The statement implies that sexual differences in a family make some one discriminated, i.e. women as the object of unequal treatment. A woman might be replaced anytime, because she is lack of ability to undergo her duty. The quotation also shows the existence of practical concubine. Although concubine is not a wife, her position in a family becomes important when she can bear a son.

"I wish you another son," I managed to say.

"I hope so." She sighed. "Because my husband says it is better to have a dog than a daughter."

We all knew the truth of those words, but who would say that to his pregnant wife? (*SFSF*, page: 214).

Snow Flower is a pity girl. She faces some difficulties in her life. She is worry about her life when she cannot bear another son. The under line sentence shows that the girl's position in the family is so unrespectable that son has more special treatment rather than girl.

The following is another clue which reveals the existence of social discrimination:

Miscarriages were common occurrences in our country, and women were not supposed to care if they had one, especially if the child was a girl. Stillbirths were considered dreadful only if the baby was a son. If a stillborn child was a girl, parents were usually thankful. No one needed another worthless mouth to feed (*SFSF*, page: 218).

The above data indicate the occurrence of social discrimination against women. It is a product of social institution, because they assume that women have no characteristics to justify the social outcomes. Thus, the social action makes women entrust to their condition.

Above all for Chinese women when they cannot bear a son they have no ability to undergo their household, because only son who has a duty to bring honors to the family by producing something worthy.

We women expected to love our children as soon as they leave our bodies, but who among us has not felt disappointment at the sight of a daughter or felt the dark gloom that settles upon the mind even when holding a

precious son, if he does nothing but cry and makes your mother-in-law look at you as though your milk were sour? We may love our daughters with all our hearts, but we must train them through pain. We love our sons most of all, but we can never be a part of their world, the outer realm of men. We are expected to love our husbands from the day of Contracting a Kin, though we will not see their faces for another six years. We are told to love our in-laws, but we enter those families as strangers, as the lowest person in household, just one step on the ladder above a servant. We are ordered to love and honor our husband's ancestors, so we perform the proper duties, even if our hearts quietly call out gratitude to our natal ancestors. We love our parents because they take care of us, but we are considered worthless branches on the family tree. We drain the family resources. We raised by one family for another. As happy as we are in our natal families, we all know that parting is inevitable. So we love our families, but we understand that this love will end in the sadness of departure. All these types of love come out of duty, respect, and gratitude. Most of them, as the women in my country know, are sources of sadness, rupture, and brutality (*SFSF*, page: 76-77).

Such statement portrays the unfair treatment experienced by women.

Feminists try to make a movement for women's freedom to make women free to do anything as their rights. Then, almost all feminists meet to announce to all over the world that women's rights are equal to men's. The rights are about welfare, education, employment, wages, housing, childcare, legal work, expressing the opinion and so on.

However the condition in the novel reveals that women have no choice in their life. They must follow the norms which are formed by the society. Women lose their personal right and are free from their parents. So, women have no full rights to be responsible for her life and do everything like men.

C. The Relation between Social Discrimination against Chinese Women as Portrayed in the Novel and that in the Life of Chinese Women in 19th Century.

Like many other literary criticisms which employ feminist approach, this study examines a literary work, which consists of esthetical; ethical, and regional values through feminist criticism. Therefore, the purpose of feminism is to increase the women's position and status in order that they have equal position with the men's. This literary criticism is directed to link between the content of the novel and the real social phenomena in which it is written. Because it reflects the social conditions and the real social picture.

Women in 19th century China, followed gender norms which emphasized the family as the primary social unit and advocated the primary function of women. Within family, one's position in the hierarchy determined his/her rank and responsibility. One aspect that was closely associated with the family system have been the relation between men and women

There are two conspicuous customs which may appear in 19th century China, that is, foot binding and concubine. Although taking a concubine was supposed to be a method of last resort for a patriarch to acquire a male heir, the practice was long established as a marker of elite status. In fact, the position of the wife remained revered with regards to her authority in the household and her role as mother to all of her husband's progeny. A concubine was not a wife.

Whereas foot binding is best understood as a form of "beauty" culture that became increasingly popular in China during the late imperial period and reached

its height during 19th century. Thought to have originated in the late Tang dynasty (618-907 CE), foot binding was first adopted by elite women. By the 19th century, the practice transcended class, although families of smaller means would bind their daughters' feet at a later age than occurred in elite families due to the need for their daughters' effort. During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 CE), foot binding became a marker of Han Chinese ethnicity.

Foot binding was practiced by all but the poorest families, and the detailed descriptions of it are not for the fearful. The practice was very painful. Besides, only daughter must follow that tradition. One of discrimination forms is based on sex. All the same, the practice accrued in Chinese society contradicted with human rights. So that, it must completely removed in the social life.

Yet women had *nu shu*, their own secret language. At the beginning of a matchmaker, Lily and Snow Flower, a girl from a larger town and supposedly from a well-connected, rich family, become *laotong*, bound together for life. Even after Lily realizes that Snow Flower is not from a better family, even when Lily marries a man with higher status than her, and Snow Flower marries to that with lower than her, they keep on close, exchange *nu shu* written on a fan.

In childhood, Lily's middle-class fate changes dramatically when the local diviner suggests that her well-formed feet make her eligible for a high-status marriage and for a special ceremonial friendship with a *laotong*. Accordingly, Lily becomes *laotong* with Snow Flower, a charming girl from an upper-class household. Together, the two begin a friendship and intimate *nu shu*

correspondence that develops with them through years of house training, marriages, childbirths and changes in social status.

In a Chinese society, women were almost got oppression from men, and the basic of women's oppression was patriarchal. Patriarchal is not the unintended and secondary consequence of some other set of factors; biology or socialization, or sex roles, or the class system. It is primary power structure sustained by strong and deliberate intention. Oppression toward Chinese women was the practice of foot binding, the force of getting married and so on. Besides, women got less of the material resources, social status, power, and opportunities for self-actualization than the men who shared their social location, either based on class, occupation, education, or many other socially significant factors.

In nineteenth century, the marriage process was taken care by the parents. They were the ones who arranged the marriage for their children. There was no choice in the matter because this was the way marriage was handled. The Chinese felt that marriage was a family matter, and not something personal. They felt that the marriage of two people was too important to be left to agreement whims and emotions of their children.

Lisa See set the novel in the remote 19th-century China. She moves the story of long-term, *laotong* Lily and Snow Flower, with their sentence by rigid code of ways for women and their unfaithfulness by pride and love. While surrendering closeness to Lily's voice, the author competently transmits historical background in the graceful prose. Besides, Lisa Sees elaboration on women's ceremonies and duties in China's rural interior brings attractive revelation about

set marriages, women's inferior status in both their natal and married homes, and the Confucian proverb and many superstitions that are living in the society. Beginning with a detailed and painful description of Lily and her sisters' foot binding, the story widens to a colorful portrait of family and village life. Most extraordinary is the author's incorporation of *nu shu*, here between Lily and Snow Flower.

The type of marriages existed in the nineteenth century was a marriage between a young adult woman and a male, who in most cases, had never met before. The two, the boy and the girl, were then forced into marital combination with each other later in their adolescence. The man was transferred to the woman's home; this was practiced in cases where the woman's household did not have a male manual worker and/or a child to continue the family line. The woman remained in her birth home after marriage, or until the birth of the first child, or permanently; this type was common in areas where women had economic autonomy because of high income and power in the silk industry.

The major marriage was the normative form, and the others were practiced according to the conditions of the two participating families. The marriage processed practiced by Chinese society gave bad treatment for women. The practice of marriage would disadvantage people on the ground of sex orientation or differences.

The story in this novel also tells that women are not allowed to meet her husband until the wedding day. A marriage will never occur there if a potential bridegroom happens to glimpse a daughter before the wedding day. Besides, there

are many ceremonies and duties that must be obeyed by women. For example, they are not allowed to be permanent resident in their husband's home until they bear their first son. Therefore, several days in a year they must visit their home.

Further, in wedding day the tradition does not allow a bride to eat for the final ten days of her wedding festivities. This is a reflection of Chinese tradition in which the bride and the groom to be have no voice and do not see each other until the wedding day. Rarely has it been made so since they are children. All roles in Chinese society are made to violate women full rights to be responsible to their own life. Besides, there is no right to make decisions freely without intervention of other people. So that, it seems that women, as citizens, are discriminated by the society.

In nineteenth century, marriage was considered an economic or status transaction between two families. Love was no part of what a husband and wife expected in a marriage. Marriage was a way of promoting the extension of the male defined family. The woman was married to the husband's family as a primary means of providing sons to continue the patriarchal line. The traditions appeared in China were unfair. Women often lost their right and freedom. As the object of culture, women have no choice to undergo their life either as daughter in family, wife in household, or society in their environment.

Hence, in the nineteenth century girls filled away their childhood to learn what would be their lifelong daily duties as an adult. The girls learned how to perform household duties and maintain modesty, while the boys learned farming and other practical skill, conventional morality, and classical Confucian thought.

The education practiced by Chinese society reflects indirect discrimination, in which it exists when the two groups, that is men and women, are treated unequally because the prior discrimination in education and housing created apparent differences in their qualifications.

Men and women are not only differently situated in the society but also unequally situated. Specifically, women get less material resources, social status, power, and opportunities for self actualization than the men who share their social location, either based on class, race, occupation, education, or any other socially significant factors.

Since the implementation of an entire one-child family in the China, higher expectations are placed upon the children. Thus, the children learn that they are not an isolated individual, but a link between their forefathers and their own children to come. This means that the children have a duty to bring honor to the family by becoming someone worthy. This ideal is presented in both nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The difference exists in how children choose what is considered worthy for the family.

Other changes in family roles are seen in the relation of husband and wife. In the nineteenth century, the man was the one who had absolute authority. The woman's position was below that of her husband, and sometimes of her son. Her main duty was to be a bearer of children, if at all possible sons. If a woman was to bear a son, then that would get her respect and strengthen her family position because she provided a great benefit to the family name.

Men, as a superior class, attempt to push and have ambition to get their position. In the other hand, women have special experiences in their life (ovulation, menstruation, and bearing a child). Thus, according to this point of view, women are able to speak only about women's experiences of life. In addition, a woman's experience comprises different perception and emotion; women do not have the same view as men, but they have different ideas about life.

Today, however, these two roles have changed. Women have achieved a higher position, while the men's authority has decreased. The Marriage Laws protect women and give them equal rights with the men in society and family. Now the husband and wife share family responsibilities.

At glance, the author's translucent prose style gleams with the beauty of 19th century Chinese culture. It also makes people burn with indignation at its sexist ugliness and injustice. Through Lisa See's careful, detail descriptions of life in a remote 19th-century Chinese village, a world where women spend their days in upstairs chambers and communicating in *nu shu* is well-narrated. The wonder of this novel is that it takes readers to a place at once foreign and familiar; foreign because of its time and setting, but familiar because of its ability to portray this landscape of love and sorrow.

Kinds of the existed tradition in China, such as foot binding, marriage with its various ceremonies, and the roles that appear in a society gave no significant contribution to women's life. The practice of foot binding has oppressed the daughters to undergo their childhood. Whereas, marriage tradition and its

ceremonies made women/girls get the status, but they have no opportunity to get the rights because the marriage was handled by their parents.

Hence, kinds of the cases in *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* which appear are the portrait of life that really happened in 19th century China, either in the form of tradition, culture, and custom or in the social action toward women's life and activity. It reflects form of discrimination that is not merely an isolated individual act but a system of social relation.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After analyzing the collected data, the researcher has a conclusion and suggestion related to the result of the previous chapter. In this section, the writer presents the conclusion of the whole analysis. This chapter contains the conclusion based on the result of the analysis and the relevant suggestion for the further researchers of this study.

A. Conclusion

After analyzing the novel, the writer can conclude that, in 19th century China as reflected in this novel, women were followed some gender norms which emphasized the family as the primary social unit and advocated the primary role of women. Changes in family roles are seen with the husband and wife. In nineteenth century, men had an absolute authority. The women's position was below that of her husband, and sometimes of her son. Above and beyond, family is a domestic group of people, or a number of domestic groups linked through descent (demonstrated or stipulated) from a common ancestor, marriage, or adoption. The position of girl/women in the family refers to their more condition and status.

All the same, in the nineteenth century, marriage was considered an economic or status transaction between two families. Love was no part of what a husband and wife expected in a marriage. Marriage was a way of promoting the

extension of the male defined family. The woman was married to the husband's family as a primary means of providing sons to continue the patriarchal line. In the status of marriage woman would be appreciated when they could give or bear son, not daughter, because sons were the foundation of a woman's self. They gave a woman her identity, as well as dignity, protection, and economic value. They created the link between her husband and his ancestors.

There are several factors which influence the social discrimination in China, such as in the form of social stratification, sex differences, and economic. Social stratification usually refers to unequal status between people or group in a society. The social status in Chinese society can be categorized into two groups: a group of honored (upper stratum) or hesitated society and an ordinary group (lower stratum). The honored society usually has exclusive life style, including in their daily social intercourse. It may be formed by controlled intercourse with low status. In Chinese society, women's status is determined by their marriage. When they marry an honor and wealth family, their status will also change.

Another factor is about sexual differences. In primitive and traditional society, sexual differences often reflect unequal right and obligation, where women's position in various aspects is occupied lower than men. Then, sexual differences have been used to justify societies in which one sex or the other has been restricted to be significantly inferior and play secondary roles. While there are non-physical differences between men and women, there is little agreement as to what those differences are implemented. The society oppresses women by making criteria, which make women commit on the way of thinking and behavior to be a

good women. Women must realize that they are the objects of culture. Sexual difference in family has made women be discriminated. Here, women become the object of unequal treatment. Women might always be replaced because they are lack of ability to undergo their duty.

The economic poverty also other factor which influence the social discrimination against Chinese women. China depends much upon agriculture. Therefore the agriculture and the status of farmer have been and will be the determining factor in Chinese economic life. So that, married woman who are in the lowest position in any household get an equal treatment. They are sent back to their natal family to anticipate and limit the new family's outcome. However, it is not the reason to consider women as the object of the economic factor.

The above explanation has convincingly proven that Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* reflect the social phenomenon of discrimination against women in 19th century China. Lisa See has presented the form, factors and kinds of such discrimination in Chinese society.

B. Suggestion

This study may help the students of English Department in understanding the literary criticism about discrimination and society's phenomena in the novel, especially for those who want to conduct the research with the same method. However, this study is still far from being perfect since it actually covers only a small part of the whole aspects that literary study can cover.

After reading and analyzing Lisa See's *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* novel, the writer knows that there are many other literary aspects such social, economic, politic etc. that can be analyzed from this novel. Therefore, this study may suggest to the next researcher to analyze other aspects from this novel.

In accordance with this study, it is advisable to conduct a study on the psychological approach. Besides, the novel can also be criticized through sociological perspective through textual perspective, i.e. classifying and explaining the sociological resources, and biographical perspective, i.e. the researcher analyze the author which is related to life history and socio cultural background.

Finally, it is hoped that this study can be used for a reference in conducting and broadening the same field or the other fields concerning with social discrimination against women. The writer also expects that the reader can give necessary correction in order that this study be a good criticism because, as being stated before, this study is far from perfection.

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APPENDIXES

I. Biography of the Author

Lisa See was born in Paris but grew up in Los Angeles, spending much of her time in Chinatown. Her first book, *On Gold Mountain: The One Hundred Year Odyssey of My Chinese-American Family* was a national bestseller and a New York Times Notable Book of 1995. The book traces the journey of Lisa's great-grandfather, Fong See, who overcame obstacles at every step to become the 100-year-old godfather of Los Angeles's Chinatown and the patriarch of a sprawling family.

It was while collecting the details of her family history for *On Gold Mountain* that she developed the idea for her first novel, *Flower Net*, which was published in 1997. Paramount Pictures bought the film rights to this riveting story of a murder investigation in today's China, and foreign rights were sold to fourteen countries. *Flower Net* was a national bestseller, a New York Times Notable Book of 1997, on the Los Angeles Times Best Books List for 1997, and was rated the top thriller of the year by Amazon.com. *Flower Net* was also nominated for an Edgar award for best first novel.

In *The Interior* (published in 2000), Liu Hulan and David Stark, characters first introduced in *Flower Net*, ferret out a killer (or killers) responsible for a series of murders in China and in the United States, as well as unravel a multi-million dollar international financial scheme with links to the Chinese countryside. At its heart, *The Interior* is a story about the sometimes blind love between a mother and daughter, the clash of global financial empires, and how the past can sometimes come back to haunt us.

Dragon Bones (Random House, 2003), the third in the Liu Hulan and David Stark series, is set against the building of the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangzi River. The novel combines ancient myth and contemporary fears of religious fanaticism and terrorism to tell a story of love, betrayal, history, ecology, and gory murders. Author Ha Jin has said of the book: "Mixing history, myths, and current events, *Dragon Bones* is an extraordinarily rich novel. It reveals the emotional and economical entanglement of China with the West, and tells a story of violence, lust, greed, fear and desperation. The novel is not only a page turner

but is also timely."

In addition to writing books, Ms. See was the Publishers Weekly West Coast Correspondent for thirteen years. As a freelance journalist, her articles have appeared in Vogue, Self, The New York Times Book Review, The Los Angeles Times Magazine, The Washington Post Book World, and TV Guide.

She wrote the libretto for Los Angeles Opera based on *On Gold Mountain*, which premiered in June 2000 at the Japan American Theatre followed by the Irvine Barclay Theatre. She also served as guest curator for an exhibit on the Chinese American experience for the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, which then traveled to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., in 2001. Ms. See then helped develop and curate the Family Discovery Gallery at the Autry Museum, an interactive space for children and their families that focus on Lisa's bi-racial, bi-cultural family as seen through the eyes of her father as a seven-year-old boy living in 1930's Los Angeles.

She recently designed a walking tour of Los Angeles Chinatown and wrote the companion guidebook for *Angels Walk L.A.* to celebrate the opening of the MTA's new Chinatown metro station. Presently, she is curating the inaugural exhibition – a retrospective of artist Tyrus Wong – for the grand opening of the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles in the winter of 2003. Ms. See most recent publication is *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (June 2005), a novel about "nu shu," the secret writing developed and used by women in a small county in China for over a thousand years.

Ms. See serves as a Los Angeles City Commissioner on the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Monument Authority. She was honored as National Woman of the Year by the Organization of Chinese American Women in 2001 and was also the recipient of the Chinese American Museum's History Makers Award in Fall 2003.

II. The History of *nu shu*

Long ago in Song time, perhaps more than thousand years ago, Emperor Song Zhezong searched through the realm for a new concubine. He traveled far, finally coming to southern Hunan province, where he heard of a farmer named

Hu, a man of some learning and good sense that lived in the village of Jintian. Master Hu had a son who was a scholar, a very high-ranking young man who had done well in the imperial exams, but the person who most intrigued the emperor was the farmer's eldest daughter. Her name was Yuxiu. She was not an entirely worthless branch, for her father had seen to her education. She could recite classical poetry and she had learned men's writing. She could sing and dance. Her embroidery was fine and delicate. All this convinced the emperor that she would make a fine royal concubine. He visited master Hu, negotiated for his clever daughter, and soon enough Yuxiu was on her way to capital. Master Hu received many gifts and Yuxiu was guaranteed a courtly life of jade and silk. Yuxiu's separation from her family was just the beginning of her woes. Even with all her talents, she could not keep the emperor amused forever. He grew tired of her pretty moon face, her almond eyes, her cherry mouth, while her talents-as noteworthy as they were here in Yongming country-were insignificant compared to those of the other ladies of the court. Poor Yuxiu, She was no match for palace intrigues.

The other wives and concubines had had no use for the country girl. She was lonely and sad but had no way to communicate with her mother and sisters without others finding out. An incautious word from her could result in decapitation or being thrown or being thrown into one of the palace wells to silence her forever. Day and night, Yuxiu kept her emotions to herself. The wicked woman of the court and the eunuchs watched her as she quietly did her embroidery or practiced her calligraphy. All the time they made fun of her work. Every word that came from their mouths was cruel, but Yuxiu was not trying to copy men's writing. She was changing it, slanting it, feminizing it, and eventually creating entirely new characters that had little or nothing to do with men's writing. She was quietly inventing a secret code so she could write home to her mother and sisters. (SFSF: 88-89).

III. Synopsis of Novel

At the end of her life, Lady Lily Lu, the 80-year-old matriarch of Tongkou village, sits down to write her final memoir—one that will be burned at her death. Using nu shu, a secret script designed and kept by women, Lily spends her final years recounting her training as a woman, her longing for love and the central friendship of her life. Born, in 1823, into an ordinary farming family, Lily might not have ended up as a wealthy matriarch. Her earliest memories are of running through the fields outside with her cousin Beautiful Moon in the last days before her foot-binding. But in childhood, Lily's middle-class fate changed dramatically when the local diviner suggested that her well-formed feet made her eligible for a high-status marriage and for a special ceremonial friendship with a laotong (sworn bosom friend). Accordingly, Lily became laotong with Snow Flower, a charming girl from an upper-class household. Together, the two begin a friendship and intimate nu shu correspondence that develops with them through years of house training, marriages, childbirths and changes in social status. Occasionally, in the midst of notes about childbirth and marriages, Lily and Snow Flower wonder how to understand the value. As the Taiping Rebellion (1851-64) approaches the villages around them, threatening to disrupt the social order, Lily and Snow Flower's private intimacy changes, stretches and is strained. Taut and vibrant, the story offers a delicately painted view of a sequestered world and provides a richly textured account of how women might understand their own lives.