

ABSTRACT

FX. Tri Ediyanto: A Comparative Study of The Love Affair of The Protagonists in Pearl S. Buck's Novels: *Peony* and *Imperial Woman*

The choice of writing literature in this thesis is based on the belief that literature is able to develop our understanding of human life. While the reason why I have chosen Mrs. Buck's novels, *Peony* and *Imperial Woman*, is that Mrs. Buck presents protagonists who come from lower-class people and they become the great women in China. They are bound by love and troubles in their life but they are able to overcome their problems. Mrs. Buck presents these novels so lively and simply that they are interesting to read.

The problem which becomes the base of writing this thesis is the comparison between *Peony's* and *Tzu Hsi's* love affair. From this love affair, there are some problems that are purposely arisen such as the relation between the protagonists' past life and their desire, their desire and pleasure, then their position or status and the achievement of their desire. Besides, this love affair also rises the idea of what will be expressed by the author by presenting the two leading women in the novels.

This thesis employs a library research to get the data such as the biography of the author, and the opinion about the author. In this thesis I applied expressive criticism since I believe that these novels are the overflows, utterances, or projection of the thought and feelings of the author. Psychological theory is also applied especially the theory of desire and pleasure to relate the protagonists' love affair.

From the study of the protagonists' love affairs, it is found that love is powerful. With love, someone is motivated to achieve whatever his goal. In other words, it can enlarge the motivation and desire to achieve success. In *Peony*, it is found that love defeats the ego and it is proved that Peony does not think of herself merely but mostly her lover. In *Imperial Woman*, after Jung Lu died, Tzu Hsi, who was moved by her love for him, is motivated to change her life from being a bad ruler to be a good ruler.

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Having criticized these novels, I have an opinion that the author also wants to express her idea about women in China who were under restriction that is sex discrimination. She wants to show us that Chinese women are strong in their desire, clever and not illiterate. They are also powerful, even they are able to refuse their lover's proposal like what Peony and Tzu Hsi have done.

In this thesis, I suggest the implementation of novels or short stories on teaching reading. I propose that group-work approach can decrease the problems which usually occur in teaching reading, especially reading with difficult and broad materials.