

ABSTRACT

L. Bening Parwitasukci. (2003). **The Life and Death of the Female Characters in the First Three of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Buru Tetralogy: *This Earth of Mankind*, *Child of All Nations*, and *Footsteps***. Yogyakarta: English Language Studies. Graduate Program. Sanata Dharma University.

This thesis discusses Pramoedya Ananta Toer's stereotypes of his female characters in the first novels of the *Buru Tetralogy*, *This Earth of Mankind*, *Child of All Nations*, and *Footsteps*. As stated in her *Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan believes that femininity is a set of female qualities required by patriarchal society to characterize "good" women which are more beneficial to men rather than women. The highest value and the only commitment for women which is in accordance with the feminine mystique is as husband's wife, children's mother, and server of physical needs of husband, children, and home. As Pramoedya also uses femininity to characterize his female characters, the research tries to find out whether his ideal women are in accordance with the patriarchal concept of femininity, which covers beauty, silence and delicacy, tears, sacrifice, and public and domestic roles for women. To provide balanced judgment on the concept of femininity, the discussion also covers woman power. Besides, the discussion also covers the role of the female characters' deaths in *Buru Tetralogy*. The discussion on the femininity and the death of the female characters leads us to put Pramoedya Ananta Toer in the right position dealing with feminism, to see whether Toer is a patriarch or a feminist.

From the discussion it is found out that Toer uses femininity to portray the life of women in society at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. In addition to the feminine characteristics, most his female characters represented by Nyai Ontosoroh, Ang San Mei, Princess Karisuta, and Surati are also portrayed as strong and capable to handle difficult situations in their life. He also makes the male character have some feminine characteristic when he makes Minke cry at certain times.

Death in Toer's *Buru Quartet* has provided him with a tool (*deus ex machina*) to entangle a complicated plot dealing with the relations of Minke and his wives. Besides, it also helps Pramoedya's characters become perfect. The death helps transfer the characters to live out their weaknesses, the living memory of them is only of the best quality that they have built during their lives.

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that Toer is indeed a male feminist writer. By contrasting his male to female characters both in their life time and after their death, Toer has succeeded to transfer his feminist notions which bring him to the group of early male feminists in Indonesia, even long before feminism has influenced men to join the feminist movement.