

**SCRUTINIZING WOMEN IMAGES OF TOTOK TIONGHOA-INDONESIAN
AND PERANAKAN TIONGHOA-INDONESIAN IN RATNA INDRASWARI
IBRAHIM'S PECINAN: SUARA HATI SANG PEREMPUAN TIONGHOA
THROUGH SOCIAL FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE**

Dyah Eko Hapsari¹ , Rosana Hariyanti²
Universitas Brawijaya Malang
deesupriyanto@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the comparison between the image of totok Tionghoa-Indonesian and peranakan female characters, particularly in the economic, educational and marital spheres in Indoneisan Literature, namely Pecinan: Suara Hati Sang Perempuan Tionghoa written by Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim. The foundation of the theory used is the socialist feminism proposed by Alison Jaggar who adopted the spirit of Marxism in the context of feminism. The research method applied is descriptive qualitative. The results show that totok Tionghoa-Indonesian women received more pressure than peranakans. Peranakan women have wider social space because they have already had legitimate citizenship. The conclusion of this study is that it is inevitable for women to be marginalized in the production process in the perspective of socialist feminism, since gender discrimination has become part of human nature that is very difficult to change.

Keywords: *women, totok Tionghoa-Indonesian, peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian, socialist feminism*

1. INTRODUCTION

Women's social position is still questionable since they are considered physically and mentally weaker than men. Subordination and discrimination accompany women in the process of self-actualization and they are considered more appropriate for the domestic field. Amy Tan, in *Bonesetter's Daughter* [12] shows a picture of an educated woman who has some good qualities, such as intelligence and high persistence. Unfortunately, all those qualities put her in difficult situation because the community sees her as a woman that has been possessed by evil spirit. It is believed that marrying this kind of woman will be dangerous since it potentially causes some disasters. Jane Tomkins, an American feminist, in her *Me and My Shadow* speaks even harder: "What enrages me is the way women are used as extensions of men, mirrors of men, devices for showing men off, devices for helping men get what they

want. They are never there in their own right, or rarely. Sometimes I think the world contains no women (2010, p. 177).

The images of women presented by Tan and Tomkins lead us then to the fact of women's inferiority in the patriarchal society. Just like what some social movements have done, many literary works were written against this patriarchal paradigm. Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim is an Indonesian writer uses the conflict of gender as the prominent theme in her literary works, in order to show that women deserve better position in society, as shown in *Pecinan: Suara Hati Sang Perempuan Tionghoa*. It is a story about two Tionghoa-Indonesian women in Indonesia. The first character is Lely. As totok Tionghoa-Indonesian, she was tightly bound to the Tionghoa's tradition of her family since she was a young girl. Both parents treated her differently from her brothers, even though she gave the biggest contribution to fulfill the daily needs of the family by working in their store. At young age, she was the only one who should terminate her study for the reason of politics while all boys of the family still continued to learn at some different schools. She had to be exiled from the family because her father did not give his consent to her marriage with the man she loved. Although she became a successful businesswoman, her personal life did not run as good as her career.

On the other side, Anggraeni as a *peranakan* Tionghoa-Indonesian, lived her life in freedom and happiness. She obtained good achievements in academic field as a lecturer of a university, such a career that is not so common in Tionghoa-Indonesian community. Her father and also her husband were Javanese men who gave her opportunities of self-development and self-actualization. There was no subordination nor discrimination in the family, so that she did not feel unlucky as a woman and human being.

The uniqueness of the novel is that it describes not only the differences between totok and *peranakan* females in Indonesia, but also the country's socio-political context that brings problems to this ethnic group. Tionghoa-Indonesian in Indonesia is often subject to the discrimination and marginalization that takes a lot of victims. Tionghoa-Indonesian women in particular are also facing another discrimination. According to Confucius lessons, the decision makers should be the ones who have integrity, ethics, and wisdom. All those qualities refer to men that could be a father, older people, or brothers. The relationship between the decision maker and the subject is parallel to the relationship of a father and his children. Becoming head of the family means that a father has an absolute power to his wife (or wives) and his children.

In the novel, Anggraini is described as *peranakan* woman. *Peranakan*, is derived from the word "anak" (child), refers to the children born from the mix-marriage between Tionghoa people and Indonesian natives [13]. Furthermore, Suryadinata [11] explains that *peranakan* refers to all descendants of the mix-marriage and they have some characteristics. They speak Malay-Chinese and work in various professional fields for living, not only in trading field as commonly known from the Tionghoa group. Their beliefs had been assimilated to other

religions like Islam, Christian/Catholic, or Buddhism. They receive legitimate Indonesian citizenship and wholeheartedly feel as part of the country.

Lely, on the other hand, is the representation of totok, the Tionghoa immigrants considered to be pure blooded because they marry people from their own group. Tionghoa-Indonesian *peranakan* call them as “singkeh” that means “new guests” arriving in Indonesia at the late of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century [11]. These immigrants keep speaking Chinese and preserving tradition of their ancestors in China. Most of them make a living by trading. They are still strongly bound to their country of origin and considered to be strangers by Indonesian natives.

Totok and *peranakan* are actually social constructs concerning to two different groups: non-Tionghoa majority and Tionghoa minority. As minority, Tionghoa people in Indonesia are often subject of suspicion in socio-political area. During the Dutch colonialism era, they were politically considered to be pro-colonialism and anti-nationalism. This paradigm causes a great effect to the way of seeing of Indonesian natives to this ethnicity. Dutch Government created a social-stratification that put European group, particularly Dutch, at the highest position. It was followed by Chinese people at the second range, and Indonesian natives at the lowest. This social stratification is known as *divide et impera* or divide and rule [13] that turns Tionghoa group to be politically marginalized because they tend to be exclusive and preserve the way of life of their ancestors [9]. In the end, some of them decide to do the assimilation with local culture. They are called as *peranakan* and more likely to be accepted by the majority group.

In regard of the women’s position in the society, totok Tionghoa-Indonesian keep on maintaining the patriarchal system. This study focuses on the comparison between the image of totok Tionghoa-Indonesian and *peranakan* female characters, that looks very significant in the novel, particularly in the economic, educational and marital spheres. The foundation of the theory used in analyzing data is the socialist feminism proposed by Alison Jaggar who adopted the spirit of Marxism in the context of feminism.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses the view of socialist feminism presented by Alison Jaggar and concept of ethnicity. In *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (1983) Alison Jaggar describes her view of socialist feminism rooted on the spirit of Marxist feminism for the idea of class struggle and radical feminism for the idea of women’s liberation, combined with some elements of psychoanalysis [3]. Socialist feminism begins from the view that gender is a social construct. Gender is different from sex, the biological identity brought by individual since he/she was born. Jaggar states that what we call as human nature is not actually natural. Human biology as being, in part, is socially constructed. Socialist feminism focuses then on the dialectical relationship between sex and society through activity organized by gender norms, and also believes that biology is “gendered” as well as sexed. The implementation of this practice is performed by psychological state, body, and individual behavior in daily life: Socialist feminism claims all of the following: that our “inner” lives, as well as our bodies and behavior, are structured by gender; that is gender-structuring is not innate but is socially imposed; that the specific characteristics that are imposed are related systematically to the historically prevailing system organizing social production; that the gender-structuring of our “inner” lives occurs when we are very young and is reinforced

throughout our lives in a variety different spheres; and that these relatively rigid masculine and feminine character structures are very important element in maintaining male dominance [5].

Since gender is considered as a social construct, the social institution plays an important role then in the differentiation process of male and female, in addition to physiological and psychological factors. The institution could be presented as family, country, community, religion, beliefs, parenting, and education. Socialist feminism also claims that the way in which women and men are socially constructed includes the ways of organizing social life. For example, people usually differentiate boys from girls by their toys. Boys are generally used to play with cars or construction of building stuffs that represent the life of outdoor area. Instead, people give dolls (representing the act of parenting) or cooking stuffs as icons of domestic area to the girls. The similar differentiation is also applied in the way of how to dress and to behave. Socialist feminism has its own view of the women's oppression that individual's life experience is shaped by sex and gender from birth to death. Equally, it is believed that an individual's experiences are shaped by class, race, and nationality [5]. This practice could be explained in the following diagram:

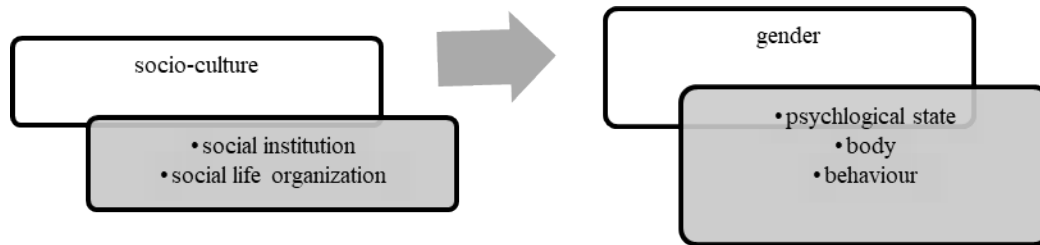


Figure 1. Formation of social attributes

Socialist feminism sees the condition above as the basis of the subordination to women. By adopting the spirit of Marxism, women are considered as “social class”. The analysis of subordination focuses on production and distribution of the basic needs organized by every social group. Socialist feminists begin from the fact that human material needs include not only food, shelter, and clothing as acknowledged in part by Marx and Engels. Equally fundamental to the survival of the species are the needs for bearing and rearing children, for sexual satisfaction, and emotional nurturance [5]. Both men and women are capable of producing all those basic needs, and have the same right for the distribution. The imbalance of the organization in society will possibly lead to the subordination to one gender, in this case is women. Still in accordance with the spirit of Marxism, the imbalance is similar to capitalism, an economic system carried out by two groups: owners of capitals and labor. It is understood that capitalism is an economic system in which the capitalists occupy dominant positions since they have authorities to the capital of the company. The implication is a firm separation between capitalists and labor [6] Socialist feminism analysis is applied by this framework, to observe the position of women in the circle of production and distribution of basic needs in social practices. Their position can be analyzed then by their nature as gender formed by society, as it is shown at the below figure:

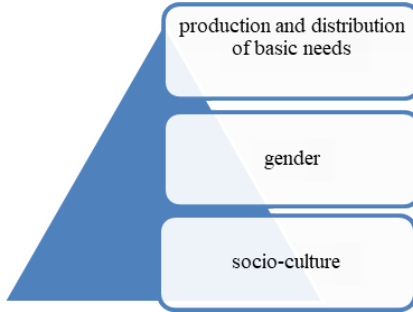


Figure 2. Gender position in the framework of socialist feminism

The analysis in this research is preceded by the description of the characters' attitudes when they face problems concerning production and distribution of basic needs. It is focused on the economic, educational, and marital spheres that are significantly presented in the novel. These three spheres consist of the basic needs as explained before, as seen in the following table:

Spheres	Basic needs
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Clothing • Shelter
Education	Emotional nurturance
Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual satisfaction • Parenting

Table 1. Spheres of basic needs

The analysis is continued by observing the correlation between these three spheres and the socio-cultural background, particularly ethnicity, in order to find the role of the social institutions and its organization in forming the attitudes and perspectives of the female characters. Ethnicity is a cultural concept related to the spread of norms, values, beliefs, symbols, and cultural practices [1]. A group of society could be mentioned as an ethnic group because they have cultural signs formed by specific historical, social, and political context, that bring up a sense of belonging. It can be said that they have the same identity rooted in the same culture.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *The Different Social Position of Totok and Peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian Women in Economy Context*

In Indonesian context, Tionghoa-Indonesian are considered economically affluent. This novel also elevates this context, but more on how totok Tionghoa-Indonesian women have to face more obstacles in earning life because of their lower social position in the mainstream Indonesian society, compared to that of the peranakans.

Lely, in this novel is the example of totok Tionghoa-Indonesian women who represents those that undergo hardships in life because they belong to one of minority ethnics in Indonesia. Since she was kid, her parents had nurtured her to work hard to earn a life by giving hands at her parents' store. She was even not given time to play with her friends and spent most of her time working. This can be seen in the following quote taken from the conversation of Anggraeni and her mother, "Lely's mom said that she was beaten by her father because you invited her to play with you at her shift at the store. I saw her forehead bruised. Don't do that again, otherwise her father kills her!" [4]. From the excerpt, it can be seen that Lely, as the only girl in the family has the duty to involve in the family's economy. She was assigned to work at her family's store without being given sufficient time for herself, even her father did not show his appreciation for her dedication. More sadly, she underwent physical and mental abuse from the father whenever she was considered of making mistakes until finally she decided to run away from the house. She chose to live in Surabaya and earned a life by taking any jobs. In short, she eventually met with a man and married him. Unfortunately, her father did not give his consent and broke his familial relationship with her. Another consequence for the marriage was, she had to be the family's breadwinner since her husband was still a college student who did not have any jobs as is shown in the following excerpt:

Actually, I have some money that I saved for ten years. I got the money from working and some of them were given by my husband when he got extra money, but I never told him anything about this. I bought some gold and this far it'd been 100 grams [4].

That gold become her capital for buying a house and running any profitable business, which made her a woman with a strong economical position in the household. However, being the one who earns the life for the family does not give any guarantees for being a happy wife. Her husband loved another woman, her mother in law always saw her as a foe, and the sister in laws never gave her any respect regardless her big contribution for the economy of the family.

What is experienced by Lely if it is discussed from the perspective of socialist feminism [5] is related to the idea that men are considered a “social class” that has control over women, who are regarded as “the other” social class. Men of all classes enjoy women’s domestic services and the extra leisure that these services give them. In earlier societies, men appropriated the labor of the children whom women reared. Within this structure of society based on kinship groups the productivity of labor increasingly develops, and with its private property and exchange, differences of wealth, the possibility of utilizing the labor power of others, and hence the basis of class antagonisms; new social elements, which in the course of generations strive to adapt the old social order to the new conditions, until at last, their incompatibility brings about a complete upheaval.

Jaggar’s explanation on the position of women in society applies to Lely’s case in the novel, especially in the husband-wife relationship. Lely worked very hard for the welfare of the family, but instead of giving her appropriate gratitude, her husband decided to have unregistered marriage (a marriage that is legal only in terms of religion) with his ex-employee. Sadly, Lely could not fight against his will, but just accepted the fact with all the pain only for her heart. Socialist feminism views male dominance as the most significant feature of contemporary society, and because it views the organization of procreation as the material basis of male dominance, it concludes that the material base of society as a whole, that which ultimately determines every other social phenomenon, is the organization of sexuality, childbearing and childrearing.

All existing societies are patriarchal and the power of the patriarchy is rooted in male control of procreation [5]. This results in the women subordination in all aspects of social life. The other woman character, Anggraeni that is the representative of *peranakan* Tionghoa-Indonesian women seems to have an ideal life. She grew up in an affectionate family whose close relationship with the parents. A family that gave wide opportunity for the children to have choices in life such as choosing spouse of their own, pursue their dreams, and continue their education until the highest level. As a *peranakan* Tionghoa-Indonesian woman, Anggraeni seems to have a better space of self-actualization. She earned a living by being a lecturer in an outstanding university, which means that she freed herself from the ethnic stereotype of involving in business. Socialist feminism sees this as a woman’s effort to secede from domestic to public sector [5]. Further, Jaggar has explained that in the production process, by times women move towards the public “economic” world of the market from the private “non-economic” sphere of the home. However, the public sector for women seems to be segmented by the nurturing label for women. There are professions that are considered “appropriate” for women, such as teacher, nurse, social worker, secretary, artist, etc.

3.2 The Different Social Position of Totok and Peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian Women in Education Context

In the novel, Lely as totok Tionghoa-Indonesian woman, is portrayed as having obstacles to lead a stable life. Since kid, she had been nurtured by her father the idea of patriarchal principle of positing men as having higher social position than women. Even the writer opens the story with the scene when Lely, as a little girl, worked very hard in her father’s store while other kids were spending their time playing with their family members at a beautiful afternoon. Interestingly, Lely’s situation is not only triggered by political factor on how Tionghoa-Indonesian undergo racial discrimination in most aspects of their life, but also how patriarchy is deeply rooted in Tionghoa’s culture.

Political problem due to limited access of education for women started long before 30 September Movement in 1965. It had started since Tionghoa-Indonesian came with the idea of *resinification* in 1930s. This movement was the result of Dutch colonial government’s discrimination against Tionghoa children in education that did not allow all of them attend Dutch schools. Hoay had stated that Tionghoa children who could access

Dutch school must have special personal connection to a certain Resident or Assistant Resident that held the position as the headmaster (*hoofdonderwijzer*) in that school. Additionally, they had paid higher tuition than that charged to other students and was required to follow Western lifestyle at school. Regardless the difficulties in fulfilling the requirements, many Tionghoa tried very hard to school their children at Dutch schools.

Lely, in this novel attended Cungk Hwa Cungk Hwi Kindergarten and continued her study to Ma Hwa Elementary School, in which Mandarin was the only language used at school. At home she spoke both in Javanese and Mandarin. Because she was never required to speak in Indonesian, she spoke in this language not very well until she attended Ma Chung Junior High School, which Indonesian was taught as one of the spoken languages at school. Unfortunately, when she was at the third grade, this school was shut down because it was suspected to involve in 30 September Movement. Sadly, she could not continue her study since her citizenship status was not yet a permanent resident. It was different from her I-ic's (uncle's) children whose Indonesian citizenship, so that they could proceed their education to higher level.

Not only in terms of politics, totok Tionghoa-Indonesian women also underwent gender discrimination in education in their own community because their belief that men have more privileged social position. In the novel, it is shown by Lely's father, in the way he gave better educational facilities to his boys, like better quality of school equipment and transportation. Even when the school was shut down, she never the support from the parents to continue her study. It can be seen from the following excerpt: "At that time all the students cried. Actually, I wanted to continue my study, but my parents did not give me any support." [4]. She was thinking of taking sewing or cooking class; instead, she was forced to work at her father's store.

Lely is the example for how totok Tionghoa-Indonesian women still undergo discrimination in education in terms of politics and culture. She is still seen as the other even in her own circle. Meij [7] has stated that this kind of treatment to women is still very common in Tionghoa-Indonesian community since they still strongly hold patriarchal perspective that becomes the main boundary for the women to show their potential. Showing off their capabilities is considered of violating their values, which means that they will not be regarded as true Tionghoa-Indonesian. In line with this point of view, Jaggar [5] stated that changing men- women social relation is like changing human nature. The socialist feminist ideal of human well-being and fulfillment includes the full development of human potentialities. Thus, when the social accesses are closed, in Lely's context is access to good education, women cannot find their true existence.

Anggraeni, on the other hand, faced different situation due to her ethnic status as *peranakan*. Since she had already held Indonesian citizenship, she and her family were welcomed by the surrounding community. Additionally, her great grandfather, Heru Caraka, was considered a heroic figure since he fought in Diponegoro war against Dutch Colonial. In short, Anggreni's family is portrayed of having mingled with the local community and culture, nationalistic, and well-accepted among the indigenous. Even in raising the children, this family was very democratic and provided open space for the children to speak up their minds. This made Anggraeni feel that she was not a Tionghoa decent and eventually decided to marry a Javanese man, Rahman, who was a psychologist and embraced Islam as her religion.

In education, Anggraeni did not face any difficulties because she held Indonesian citizenship; thus, she had similar rights as other Indonesian in all life aspects. When Lely was forced not to continue her study due to 30 September Movement, Anggraeni still had the chance to school: "At that time she attended SMP (junior high school) 3 Malang. She and her brother could still attend that school because they were Indonesian" [4]. Politically, Anggraeni did not have any boundaries to make her dream come true, pursuing her doctorate degree. The support of the family was also very significant to her success in education. Her parents never limited her right to choose the best in life since she was kid. The father kept saying that: "You experience childhood once in a lifetime and children's duty is playing and being happy" [4]. His parents also encouraged their children to join extra-curricular activities they liked, such as writing journal, writing short stories, swimming, and watching movies [4]. For the family, education was a way to expose their potential, and

Anggraeni as a *peranakan* Tionghoa-Indonesian girl did not face any discrimination. She was given open opportunity to pursue her dream and expose her potential to public.

3.3 The Different Social Position of Totok and Peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian Women in Marriage Context

The analysis on this context focuses on the pattern of husband-wife relation of the Tionghoa-Indonesian characters in the novel. Additionally, the discussion on the pattern will be discussed from Jaggar's perspective that includes sex, emotion, and childrearing as the significant factors in women's social positioning.

Lely's marriage to Gunaldi had overcome so many obstacles. They met in their childhood time and eventually decided to marry although Lely's family did not give the consent because the family thought that Gunaldi did not come from a descent family. At the same time, Lely also had to face the truth that Gunaldi's family members offer her cold shoulders, which lead to frequent conflicts with her husband. More desperately, Gunaldi was found out of having an affair with his ex-employee and forced to marry her since they had already got a son. Gunaldi's mother supported the marriage due to the idea that a son could continue her family line. Regardless the hardships in her marriage, Lely could not divorce Gunaldi because still loved him a lot and thought that her husband were really dependent on her. Anggraeni's marriage life was on the other way around from what happened to Lely's. Anggraeni and Rahman were portrayed as a great team. They understood each other very well, always had discussion whenever they had problems, especially those related to childrearing. Her husband also opened wide opportunity for her to pursue her dream of getting her doctor ship. Even when she decided to take some times for herself at Malang, the city where she was born.

The difference pattern of marital relationship lays on how emotionally and sexually Lely felt insecure because of her social dependency on her status as a wife, while Anggraeni was in satisfactorily condition. This gives significant effect on the situation of the family's relationship. Lely's had to deal with unharmonious condition, but Anggraeni was portrayed of having such an ideal situation at home. Socialist feminism sees this difference from the framework of the relation between capital owner and labor. According to Jaggar [5], all human adults, both male and female, are capable of virtually all types of labor. Both sexes can contribute to producing the means of satisfying human needs for food and shelter, for sexual satisfaction, and for emotional nurturance. Men as well as women are capable of caring for and socializing children. However, there is one difference between the productive capacity of women and men; the biologically grounded difference that only men have been able to impregnate women, and only women have been able to give birth to children. Because of this difference in the male and female contribution to procreation, women's capacity for reproduction historically has been far more limited than men's. A woman has been able to produce a maximum of only 20 or so children in her lifetime, whereas a man has been able to father literally hundreds of children. For this reason, women's reproductive capacity has been an especially important productive resource in all previous society. Even, it happened in human history that a woman was killed because of her incapability to produce a son. This proves that the preference for male offspring is very high in society, which means that women are considered only as the second citizen.

Social feminism sees this as part of the procreative and emotional circle where men are the controlling (ruling) group that forces women, as the subordinate one (laboring group), to do sexual, procreative and emotional labor for them. In economics perspective, men belong to so called the capital owner while women to labor. They do transaction as a way to produce and distribute sexual needs through marriage and also prostitution, so that this interaction can be seen as part of economic transaction in Marxist perspective although they do not use money as the medium of exchange.

Based on this perspective, the pattern of Lely-Gunaldi relationship indicates the formation of ruling group-laboring group, in which the distribution of sexual and emotional needs is not in balance. As a wife, Lely always tried to create a conducive situation for her husband's mental and physical well being and reputation. She sacrificed her own happiness for the marriage sustainability. However, the husband does not appreciate what she had done for the family. He even took his mother's side and had an affair with another woman.

Ironically, the affair got the support from Gunaldi's mother because the woman gave birth to a son that is considered as the heir of the family. Actually, Gunaldi did not see Lely's incapability of bearing any son as a problem, but eventually he was in line with his family's tendency of blaming Lely for the unhappy marriage. Sadly, Lely did not do anything to defend herself because since the very first she decided to marry Gunaldi, she wanted to dedicate her life for the husband. This can be seen from the following excerpt: "Since I was 17 until now, what I really want to do is dedicating my whole life for my husband without thinking about myself" [4]. This shows how Lely "voluntarily" posits herself as the controlled, labor class. This comes to a worse situation where Lely has to accept the mistress' child in the family: "I often hear people say that his mother loves Atik a lot because she gave birth to a son for the family, while mine are all girls. I have to agree on the idea that they will hold a ceremony for giving the boy our family name" [4]. This shows the desperate position of Tionghoa women when they cannot bear any sons for the family. It is in line with Tionghoa's culture that women are only seen powerless member in the family. The only way to gain a better social position is through marriage, especially when they are able to bear sons as to continue the family line. If not, they will be deprived at the bottom of the social layer (Korban dan Pengorbanan Perempuan Etnis Tionghoa di Indonesia, 2015, par. 2). This gender discrimination has been deeply rooted in Tionghoa's culture that can be seen from their principles for obedience namely, (1) if a woman is not yet married to a man, she has to obey her father; (2) if she is married, she has to obey her husband; (3) if she turns to be a widow, she has to obey her son. Another cultural principal of Tionghoa society is called filial piety that emphasizes the idea of obedience of the young generation towards the elders in the community, especially of the male. Such piety has been practiced from generation to the next generation. The implementation of this principle is children have to carry the duty to take care of the parents, like for example taking care of them when they are old, keep their good reputation in the community, and mind their welfare [13]. The principles explicitly derive the idea that women are always in secondary position, even in the smallest unit in society such as in family. Thus, women who practice the principles are regarded as good women, as it is also shown in the novel; "She even told me that you are more obedient than my sisters to their husbands. It is a great example for our daughters" [4]. Since it has been the value in the community, Gunaldi wanted her daughters to follow the tradition and saw what Lely did was right accordance to Tionghoa's norm, without considering his wife's well-being. Lely has sacrificed her life not only for her husband, but also for fulfilling the traditional cultural standards of Tionghoa's culture for being a good woman. There is a transactional action performed by Lely in the case of how she tries to get social acknowledgement by sacrificing her right as a woman to pursue a happy life.

Anggraeni, the peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian woman, faces different situation. According to Onghokam [9], peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian lifestyles are greatly influenced by three different cultures, namely Tionghoa, Javanese, and Western. The assimilation of these culture in feminist context can be seen from how Anggraeni suggested that Lely should be able to defend her right as a woman for having a happy life by reconsidering the husband's misconducts not to happen again. At this point, Anggraeni is portrayed as a woman whose awareness on gender equality and struggles to fight for her rights. Onghokam [9] in the same source, also has stated that peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian perspective on gender has shifted from patriarchal

to matrilocal-bilocal. This indicates that peranakan Tionghoa-Indonesian society has better position for women, compared to that in totok Tionghoa-Indonesian society.

4. CONCLUSION

From the analysis that focuses on the comparison between the life of totok and peranakan TionghoaIndonesian, it can be concluded that their decision whether they take side on the majority or defend themselves to be in their own circle really does matter. As it is portrayed in the novel, both of them cannot let go off their social roles as women, who in socialist-feminist perspective belong to labor class, but Lely has double-burden since totok Tionghoa-Indonesian culture still has a stronghold to patriarchal system that posits men as the ruling class. Anggraeni who takes side on the majority by holding a legal Indonesian citizenship, has a better life compared to what Lely experiences in her life as a totok Tionghoa-Indonesian that are still considered as the others. Anggraeni's better situation is due political and cultural factors. Politically, she is given more space to show off her potential since she is "part" of the mainstream community; culturally she is benefited by matrilocal-bilocal system run among the peranakans. Thus, women's access to any society's opportunities is not defined by one factor, but unfortunately it goes to a complicated web work relation of so many factors, like what Jaggar has stated that changing women's social position is like changing the nature of human beings.

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