PORTRAYAL OF RIE'S STRUGGLE THROUGH MALE DOMINATION IN JOYCE LEBRA'S THE SCENT OF SAKE

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Abstrak

Feminisme adalah suatu gerakan yang ingin menyetarakan kedudukan atau kesetaraan perempuan dengan kaum laki-laki. Perempuan berjuang untuk memperoleh kesetaraan dalam tingkatan kehidupan sosial bermasyarakat. Dominasi kaum laki-laki ini biasa disebut dengan patriarki. Patriarki adalah sebuah sistem sosial dimana laki-laki adalah sebagai pemegang kekuasaan tertinggi dan lebih dominan daripada kaum perempuan. Penelitian ini membahas tiga permasalahan. Pertama, tentang penggambaran perempuan jepang pada novel yang digambarkan melalui tokoh utama, yakni Rie. Kedua, membahas perjuangan yang dihadapi oleh Rie di tengah dominasi laki-laki. Yang terakhir adalah hasil dari perjuangan yang di hadapi oleh Rie. Untuk menjawab pertanyaan tersebut, penelitian ini menggunakan latar belakang sejarah sake dan shinto. Selain itu teori feminisme, patriarki, gender dll. Hasil dari analisis penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perempuan Jepang tidak diperbolehkan bekerja di depan publik dan tidak memiliki kesempatan untuk memilih apapun termasuk memilih pasangan hidup. Kedua, bentuk dari perjuangan Rie sebagai tokoh yang disubordinasikan adalah belajar menerima anak dari geisha untuk menjadi penerus The White Tiger dan belajar mencintai anak tersebut, melakukan pemberontakan secara diam-diam, mengontrol bisnis sake melalui anaknya yang sangat patuh padanya dan bertanggung jawab baik soal pekerjaan di rumah maupun di bisnis sake. Akhirnya dia berhasil memperoleh pengakuan dari lakilaki yang ada disekitarnya bahwa dia adalah perempuan yang sangat bersemangat, berani bekerja di dunia publik (manajemen keuangan kantor sake) dan membawa dampak positif atas perjuangannya selama ini. Dengan demikian dapat dikatakan bahwa The Scent of Sake yang ditulis oleh Joyce Lebra adalah sebuah novel yang berhasil menggambarkan perjuangan perempuan dalam hal bisnis yang berdampak besar bagi keluarganya.

Kata kunci: Sake, Shinto, feminism and male domination.

Abstract:

Feminism is a movement that wants to equalize the position or equality of women and men. Women struggles for equality at the level of social life. Male domination is known as patriarchy. Patriarchy is a social system where men are the holders of the highest power and are more dominant than women. The purposes of this research are to find out three problems. First, the portrayal of the general condition of Japanese Women in the World of Sake is Described in the Novel which is depicted by the main character, Rie. Second, the portrayal of Rie's struggles to survive the male domination in the novel. The last one is the result of Rie's struggle. To dig up those problems, this research uses the historical background of sake and Shinto. In addition, the theories of feminism, patriarchy, gender, etc. The researcher is finding out some results. First, Japanese women are not allowed to work in public and do not have the opportunity to choose anything including those who choose a life partner. Second, the form of Rie's struggle as a subordinated figure is learning to accept a child from a geisha to become the successor of The White Tiger and learn to love him, to carry out a silent rebellion, to control the sake business through his son who is very obedient to her and responsible at home and in the sake business. Finally, she gets recognition from the men around her because she is a very passionate woman, dares to work in the public world (sake office financial management), and has a positive impact on her struggles so far. Thus it can be said that The Scent of Sake written by Joyce Lebra is a novel that succeeds in depicting women's struggles in business that have a big impact on her families.

Key Words: Sake, Shinto, Feminism and male domination.

I.INTRODUCTION

"Get back to the kitchen!" Kinzaemon bellowed. Rie was careful not to let her anger and disappointment show. She bowed, dropped the brush, and ran toward the door leading through the earthen corridor to the rooms of the house. The kitchen. That was the place of women. How unreasonable of her father to expect her to only a confined "girl in a box" (Lebra, 2009:7).

What should a woman do when she is confronted with statements similar to that above? Can she behave as society expects her to do? If these words come from a father to her daughter, will the daughter still appreciate her father? Does she have a big dream for the future? Will her dream come true?

The Scent of Sake is a novel written by Joyce Lebra, an American historian of Japan and India. Her interest in feminism and women's history was ignited in 1975, and she has continued to "give voice to the voiceless" as a feminist historian, novelist, and lecturer. As a novelist, she studied women's roles in Japan. She concluded that women are treated differently in society; they experience gender inequality, gender oppression, and structural oppression.

Gender inequality is a situation when women and men are treated differently. A woman's place was in the home as wife and mother; the man's place was in the public sphere (August, 2009:1). Then, gender oppression is a system which someone or groups are disadvantaged because of their gender. Woman is criticized for every single thing such as she is too fat to be a model, etc. While, an article of The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege, and Oppression says that systematic oppression is the way in which history, culture, ideology, public policies, institutional practices, and personal behaviors and beliefs interact to maintain a hierarchy – based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and or other group identities – that allows the privileges associated with the dominant group and the disadvantages associated with the oppressed, targeted or marginalized group endure adapt over to and time. (http://opensourceleadership.com/documents/DO%20Definition s.pdf). These are the different definition of gender that treated differently in society.

The Scent of Sake tells about Rie, the only daughter of Omura's house. Omura is a family name in Japan. It produces the best sake in Kobe, Japan. Sake is already recognized with the pleasure and the good smell in Japan. Rie cannot be an heir to Omura House because she is a woman. This family has a son named Toichi, an heir of the next generation. When he was several months old, he fell into a well and died. So, the family has no son as the heir of the business. Rie, however, cannot be the heir to replace Toichi because she was a woman. Now, she has the obligation to produce an heir for the family. In Japan, all authority is the domain of men; including an heir. There is no space for a woman to take part. However, Rie has a desire to lead her family's business. She wants to make her parents proud

of her but she has to face some struggles as a woman in the middle of male domination. Women were not allowed to express their opinion in a business meeting or something of man's discussion for business.

This is the reason why the present writer chose this novel, The Scent of Sake, to be analyzed because of Rie's courage to have a big dream for her family business in the future. She has to face some struggles to make it happen. Therefore, this research focuses on discussing the main character's struggles, Rie Omura, in her position as a woman in male domination.

Statement of the Problem

This research goes to answer these following questions:

- 1. What is the general condition of Japanese women in the world of *sake* in the novel?
- 2. What are Rie's struggles to survive the male domination in the *sake* business?
- 3. What are the results of Rie's struggles through the world of sake?

Significance of the Study

The present writer does this research through the portrayal of Rie as the main character who has a dream for the future. These studies are to know about sake and its significance, to know about the condition of Japanese women during the 17th century, and to know the condition of Rie's struggles in the novel.

Scope and Limitation

Joyce Lebra has written some historical novels such as Durga's Sword (1995), Sugar and Smoke (2005) and The Scent of Sake (2009). However, the present writer will only talk about one of Lebra's novels titled The Scent of Sake (2009). There are several topics to analyze in the novel such as theme, love, culture in Japan, woman's struggle and marriage system in Japan. There are several female characters in the story; Rie, Hana (Rie's mother), O-Toki (Jihei's favorite geisha), Tama (Yoshitaro's wife), O-Natsu (faithful family servant), etc. However, this study limits its discussion to only a discussion on Rie as the one only daughter in the family business.

II. REVIEW OF THE SELECTED LITERATURE

This chapter is a review of related literature guiding the present writer in analyzing Lebra's novel: The Scent of Sake. To be able to analyze the portrayal of Rie's struggles through male domination in the novel, the present writer uses some knowledge regarding sake, Shinto, patriarchy, gender, feminity vs masculinity, and feminism. This selected literature will support her in detail in the analysis. This selected literature will support her in detail the analysis.

Sake

Sake is an alcoholic beverage from Japan. It consists of rice, rice malt, water, and yeast. This alcoholic beverage is derived from fermented rice. It also has a large collection of flavors. Actually, sake is called nihonshu or seishu in Japan and has been a favorite drink there for over a thousand years. Sake is one of the world's most complex processes. As time goes by the increase in sake scales still exists in today's sake industry. While for the first time, it was produced in China, the record of rice drinks in Japan dates to 689 AD. It was named 'The Drink of the Gods' and used to celebrate religious ceremonies. Omiki is one of the traditional rituals that mean people drink sake in religious communities. Japanese believe that sake is known as pure drinking without any sourness. They believe that if women are next to the Kura (the place where sake is fermented) so the sake will be damaged. It will cost the merchants big loss but they did not give any explanation for it. It is just a tradition that came from ancient. Palupi in Women's Power Depicted in The Scent of Sake by Joyce Lebra (2014) says that they never told the reason why women could damage the taste of sake but they believe it and it became a tradition. The tradition that business is not for women also applies to Rie although she had many good ideas about their business.

Shinto

As a national religion in Japan, Shinto is very close to sake. There are some rituals that symbolize sake as a purification. After Shinto, there was Buddhism was introduced in Japan. Now, Shinto and Buddhism are both popular. Most people will have a Shinto ceremony to celebrate their birth, a Shinto or Christian-style

wedding, and a Buddhist funeral. Every Japanese will have his or her own Shinto shrine at their house. A shrine is a place where kami – gods, or deities—indeed. In Shinto, there is a washing ritual. A shrine is a holy or sacred place, which is dedicated to a specific deity, ancestor, hero, martyr, saint, daemon, or similar figure of awe and respect, at which they are venerated or worshipped. Thus, every ritual of Shinto has to prepare sake as the main drink the ritual.

Patriarchy

The word 'patriarchy' literally means the rule of the father or the 'patriarch', and originally it was used to describe a specific type of 'male-dominated family'—the large household of the patriarch which included women, junior men, children, slaves, and domestic servants all under the rule of this dominant male (Bhasin, 2006:3). According to Theorizing Patriarchy the term often patriarchy" calls it "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby, 1990:10). Now it is used more generally "to refer to male domination, to the power relationships by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways" (Bhasin, 2006:3).

Furthermore, Lerner says that "men hold power in all the important institutions of society" and that "women are deprived of access to such power". However, it does not imply that "women are either totally powerless or totally deprived of rights, influence, and resources". Women are not totally powerless but have more power. It is clearly visible when women are able to work on a lot of work. Women give birth, take care of their children, clean the House and serve their families but male domination in a country makes women under pressure. "Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social ideological, political system in which men—by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male" (Warnock, 2009: 1). Both Lerner and Donna agree that patriarchy is dominated by male.

Gender

Gender is a characteristic that is bound to one person and that distinguishes masculinity and femininity. Characteristics are bound in the form of behavior or division of roles between men and women. For example, if there is a woman that brave and ambitious social society will say that that woman is masculine. Then, if there is a man that tenderness, patience, and kindness people will say that man is feminine. At the core of the sociological analysis of gender is the distinction between biological sex and gender; sex is a property of the biological characteristics of an organism; gender is socially constructed, socially created" (August, 2009: 1).

To be specific, there are some kinds of gender discrimination. Women are treated differently from men in society such as in education, career, business, etc. Gender discrimination is discrimination against a person based on her or his gender. There are kinds of gender discrimination or gender inequality such as marginalization, subordination, stereotype, and double burden. Those are kinds of discrimination social society. The preset writer has already chosen one of them. Double burden is the most reliable theory that use to analyze social problems that the character has to face in the novel.

Feminism

In encyclopedia of feminism, written by Lisa Tuttle in the year 1986, feminism in English feminism, which derives from Latin femina (woman), literally means "having the quality of women's". It is also described in the Oxford dictionary that feminism was advocating women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes. Feminism comes as a movement of women to fight patriarchy domination in society. On patriarchy point of view, man hold power of woman. Woman is an object for domestics or sexuality.

III. PORTRAYAL OF RIE'S STRUGGLE THROUGH MALE DOMINATION IN JOYCE LEBRA'S THE SCENT OF SAKE.

In chapter two, the present writer already explained the theories she used to analyze Rie's struggles through male domination as portrayed in the novel. In chapter three, the present writer will analyze the portrayal of Japanese women in the sake world and the struggles of the main character. In the end, the present writer will explain the result of her struggles for the business, The White Tiger.

Portrayal of General Condition of Japanese Women in the World of Sake Described in the Novel

In this novel, the condition of Japanese women is portrayed as women full of obedience. Japan is known as a patriarchal society in which men are the head of the family and have a higher social status than women. The man is the center of authority in all things in society. The words or rules that men say should be obeyed. Patriarchy puts men as the holder of power and rules in education, politics, business, and also family. So, women come as subordinated in her society. They are treated less important than anything. The present writer can see obviously how the condition of Japanese women through the main character, Rie, in the world of sake in Kobe, Japan. Furthermore, the present writer will show that women in Japan are limitless of men's authority.

Now that she was grown, now that she had her own secret opinions of what women could accomplish, she made it her duty to wash the barrels, a task she took on when she knew her father was not looking. As atonement. (Lebra, 2009:2).

In this situation, Rie as the main character has found her own questions. Getting older is one of a human being. She tries to take a job at White Tiger. Usually, washing the barrels is a man's duty. The author portrays an acknowledgment from within the heart of a girl child who is eager to provide the best for her family's business interest but her father does not allow her. Since she was a child, her society –including family members– told that women did not take any responsibility in a job in the world of sake. "Now that she was grown" is a period that childhood is the time that child is very easy to be told something; advice, seduction or prohibition. Rie grown as a woman who never known why was she could not take a piece of duty of her father's business. As a daughter, she would like to give herself to help her father. While, she remembered Hana – mother – always reminded her that woman cannot work around sake or go to the kura, a warehouse of sake.

"Get back to the kitchen!" Kinzaemon bellowed. Rie was careful not to let her anger and disappointment show. She bowed, dropped the brush, and ran toward the door leading through the earthen corridor to the rooms of the house. The kitchen. That

was the place of women. How unreasonable of her father to expect her to only a confined "girl in a box" (Lebra, 2009:7).

This is a situation when her father, Kinzaemon IX, checked the barrels in kura. Kinzaemon was very shocked and angry in his deep heart. He tried to speak up and remind Rie. His father spoke of not demure to her. This is a portrayal of his father's words who used the exclamation mark as a form of restriction or warning. On the other hand, she is very passionate about the sake. When her father bid her too close to the forbidden room, her heart is very devasted. Japan women through Rie's character is the depiction of women without options.

Portrayal of Rie's struggles to survive the male domination in the novel

Throughout the novel, the author portrayed some struggles that the main character, Rie, has to face as a woman. Rie is a smart and passionate woman. For the twentieth-year-old woman, it is too hard for Rie to survive a lot of problems in the middle of her family; as a wife and a mother.

Patience and love

The patriarchy greatly affects the social construct the woman in any kind of their activities. Here are the struggles that Rie has to get to make her dream come true – White Tiger become number one in Japan. Well, it was very hurt when the baby expected by your family was not your baby.

"Rie you know Kin is really looking forward to having another generation here, for continuity of the house." her mother commented. "We all are. He'll inhale the smell of sake as soon as he's drinking milk here. And once there's a baby in the house, who knows, you may become pregnant," Hana added, as if to console her (Lebra, 2009:52).

Here is a portrayal of when Hana tries to know Rie's feelings. "We all are" is a statement that the mother supports her husband and son-in-law and also Rie to bring the baby boy to the house for the future. Otherwise, her mother also dared not directly convey the opinion of the child related to her husband closer to her mother. Indirectly, she also did not dare to convey the opinions of the child

related to her husband closer to her mother. She was very disappointed when she had to accept the blood of a geisha's child who became the heir of Omura's house.

Silent rebellion

On the day of her brother's grief, there was Kato's third son named Saburo Kato. Saburo approached her whispering to her, he expressed his condolences. Rie fell in love with him. Saburo was a handsome and friendly man. Rie felt her grief split as Saburo's brown eves stared at her. Since then, Rie noticed it more than once and she wished that the man would be her husband someday. But, as the one and only daughter in the family, Rie should be married to the best man of her family's choice for Omura's house. Her husband is mentioned as mukovoshi - an adopted husband to continue the business. Saburo was not on a list of her parents' candidates that were suggested to Rie. The reason why her parents chose Jihei as the mukoyoshi was because he had been an apprentice at the house of the Ohara family, a brewer too. So, Kinzaemon and Hana know if Jihei's been trained properly. So. Rie is unable to get her love. She sacrifices herself for White Tiger future – the name of the business.

"You are close to twenty now, and it's high time we were serious about your marriage. And we have several good candidates. Your father and I are especially interested in the Okamoto son, Jihey. He has been apprenticed to the Ohara house, so we know he has had excellent training, and the reports we hear are good" (Lebra, 2009:6).

Thus, Rie married that stranger man and she did not love him. In traditional Japan, marriage is a way of expanding the family business. Now, Rie has a husband, Jihei. She was unable to get her love from Saburo. Jihei always goes to Sawaraya at night. Rie gets depressed with the geisha bloodline in Omura's house. She has an idea.

"What I want you to do is to go to your relative tonight. Ask them if they would make their house available two nights from tonight from midnight until down. If they agree, give them this money." Rie handed the larger pouch to O-Natsu with both hands. "But tell them they must remain absolutely silent about this, on pain

of death. And they must not be there those hours from midnight until down." Rie studied O-Natsu closely as she spoke (Lebra, 2009:86).

This is a kind of silent rebellion against all the vile that she has got. Rie decided to make a strategy to meet Saburo at night. Night means when the sun is below and all the workers are sleeping. If Rie goes out in the afternoon, it is easy for the reader to find Rie and Saburo clearly. So, the night is the best choice ever for Rie and Saburo. She finally success to arrange her meeting with Saburo by calling a maid.

Take control to her son.

At first, the Omura family feels that Jihei is a man who is very diligent, hard-working, and responsible. That is why they chose Jihei to be the best husband for Rie. Unfortunately, he is not as their expected. Thus, he spent money to have fun with the geisha. The relationship between Rie and Jihei as a couple did not good as well. Rie was very busy learning everything about the business, teaching her children, and noticing the kurabito – the employee – while Jihei also busy with his geisha(s).

"What happened at the Brewers Association meeting last evening?" Rie asked Yoshitaro one morning when they were alone. "Did you speak for your father?" I did, Mother. It was all right. Father nodded as I spoke. I managed to acquire ten more shares. (Lebra, 2009: 184)

Here is a conversation when Yoshitaro reports his meeting with all the successor of her mother. For every single part of the business, Rie has to know the details of it. She cannot go to the meeting for all the men's part because she is a woman. The business is close to men only but the way she can control the business is by controlling her son.

Responsible for business and domestic

As a woman, Rie has to manage herself to have time for her children and belong to domestic. Here, a woman gets a double burden rather than a man. Rie as a hardworking woman, never stop thinking about Omura House every day. All of her life is about sake. She wakes up early in the morning. She prepares all things for her family, works in the office, and teaches her children. She did it all as a wife and mother. While her husband worked only in the office, and at night he go to Sawaraya to meet his geisha and spent his

night all day long. It is not a balanced thing between men and women.

The morning after her baby's arrival Rie rose even earlier than usual, determined to be the first one up in the family. Hard work seemed the best antidote to the outrage she felt at the illegitimate infant Jihei had brought into the house (Lebra, 2009:56).

The presence of a geisha's son in the Omura family makes Rie too much pain after her first child's miscarriage. She realized that she could not change things. But she does not want to get too sad, she tries harder to work because she knows that by working she is able to forget all the things that Jihei has done to her. In the middle of her duty as a wife, she also has to teach her son every day.

The result of Rie's struggle

In this section, the writer will analyze and discuss the result of her struggles as a woman portrayed in the novel. Rie never stops to give her best for her family's business. She had through all things and scarify herself for the future of White Tiger. In her consciousness making herself a subject in the middle of male domination, she can make the social society acceptance and make *White Tiger* become number one.

Individual recognition in male domination

Rie grew up in a family of sake business who had male power indeed. As a woman, there are many prohibitions that Rie has to face. Start from giving an opinion until doing something for helping the business. Rie is an active and ambitious woman.

"Of course we need to plan in business. And I can see that you are a good planner." He smiled, his eyes wrinkling to slits. Rie reached for her father's hand and gave a gentle squeeze. Sometimes she felt that her father did understand her (Lebra, 2009:32).

It is an unexpected thing that Rie feels. She was very happy at the time. Finally, her father admitted Rie as a daughter who has a big dream for this business. This was a major first step for a father who was opposed to woman's opinions in a business. Rie is not entirely detached from social construction. While she can put herself as a subject, not an object. This is proven by her courage to give an opinion directly to her father. Here is a conversation between Rie and her father when they are talking about business:

"Father, I have an idea... for the house." She refrained from using the term business, though of course they were connected, identical. "What now, Rie-Chan?" Well, I know it's way too soon to speak of this, but you've noticed, haven't you, how bright Fumi is? Brighter than Yoshi, really (Joyce L, 2009:131).

After the death of her father, Kinzaemon IX, she managed all the preparations for the next heir in Omura House. So far, her experiences at giving outstanding ideas were able to make herself appreciated by the people around her, especially the workers at Omura House.

The power of Rie's strategy to arrange all her family members and workers is the most appreciated for a woman. Rie always prepares for the good person as the successor to be of White Tiger.

Did she detect some resentment in the behavior not only of Yamaguchi but other brewers as well? Moreover, it was known among brewers that she, a woman, was making decisions for White Tiger, not Yoshi. She was venturing into many areas reserved for men. These troubling thoughts coursed through her again and again. How she missed her father and his unerring good judgment (Lebra, 2009:303).

White Tiger is controlled by Rie. Even if it's led by a male from his husband to his grandson. Since her father passed away, Rie was the decision-maker behind their words. She would lend the business become fail. So, her son has to report all things about sake and business development to her. Her awareness of her existence as a daughter in the middle of the family makes her succeed in finding herself who has the power in leading a business. She does not want to give up so easily with her presence as a woman in social construction.

"We have made it, grandmother! White Tiger is now number one! It was announced at the Brewers Association last night." Her grandson grinned, his well-muscled arms akimbo. She gasped. This was the day she had striven for since that day at the well, when she had lost Rie looked at Hirokichi, and bowed several times. She quickly took a handkerchief from her sleeve and dabbed at tears that threatened to overflow (Lebra, 2009:354).

In the past, the condition of *White Tiger* also ever suffered losses because their market in Edo was taken by Yamaguchi around ten percent. And then, Rie once voiced to raise an idea about another business that Omura house has and finally succeeded though the opinions were delivered by Kin. She could not deliver her opinion. After that, Omura house also suffered losses because of fires caused by Jihei. This just knows when a few years after the death of Kinzaemon IX, Rie's father.

Some of those conditions at the time that *White Tiger* was having failed several times from other businesses sake, especially Yamaguchi. Rie felt humiliated when Yamaguchi was one step ahead of *White Tiger*. At that time she dreamed of *White Tiger* becoming the number-one sake business in Japan. She also dreamed White Tiger would have branches of sake which is able to master the whole area around Japan. These are all she dreamed of. The day when the Brewers Association announced that White Tiger is number one of all is the happiest moment that Rie has waiting for a long time. Finally, in her old age, she got recognition by males that she is a good planner and got the greatest business achievement. All the sacrifices were successfully completed. The heir had shirked her duty.

IV.CONCLUSION AND SUGGETION

The first identification starts with the portrayal condition of Japanese women in the novel. Women get subordinated to male domination. Women cannot work in the public sphere. They work for domestic only and have no opportunity to choose something. Second, Rie is a character who is passionate about sake. The last, Rie gets individual recognition in male domination. Learning to be brave appears in public as a woman who has power in society and ultimately the presence of women is able to bring more positive changes in the community without leaving the other responsibilities. Rie has successfully faced that struggles until the end of her ages.

Through analyzing Joyce Lebra's The Scent of Sake, the readers are expected to get more knowledge about women's struggles with male domination. The present writer suggests that

readers who are interested in this novel may find another part of intrinsic elements such as minor characters and theme.

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