

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the study

It is known that literature is the art of form which uses words as medium. Novel is a medium used by people to entertain and to share ideas or experiences in life. In the *Encyclopedia Americana*, Carne explains as follows :

The word novel is derived ultimately from the Latin adjective "Novellus" diminutive of "novus" meaning "New", hence, when applied to fiction it means a new tale or story. It was adopted in the 16th century by the English language from "Novella", an Italian word used to describe a short tale portraying the incidents and often amorous intrigues of everyday living. (1972: 510)

Studying literature, especially novel is necessary because it presents incidents in everyday life. It entertains people by expressing personal joy and pain, reflects religious devotion, glorified a nation or hero, or advocates a particular point of view, whether it is political, social or aesthetic. Moreover, by reading a novel one can broaden the knowledge about its cultural background and the author's vision in expressing life.

Reading the novel *Silent Honor* by Danielle Steel, the writer is interested in his ideas. It is really such a fantastic novel which describes universal problems, emotional, spiritual and intellectual concern of mankind. It talks so much about the idea of feminism.

The term feminism is also an interesting point to be discussed. Perhaps, the answer of why feminism becomes very interesting point if that it has even more to do with the history of ideas about gender. Historically, thinking about gender

happens in cultures where gender configurations (the social meaning system that encode sexual difference) undergo changes or shifts.

Gender becomes very important because it means differentiation, usually on the basis of sex, between social roles and functions labeled as “masculine” and “feminine”. It depends on the equality between sexes, man and woman. For years, women are demanding an equal standart on the balance between man and woman. All societies recognize that some periods of time happens some sort of gender distinction. Therefore, gender seems worthwhile to create attention. ([http / www.colorado.edu/English/Eng L.2012/Klages/1 feminism. Html](http://www.colorado.edu/English/EngL.2012/Klages/1_feminism.html))

Danielle Steel, in the novel *Silent Honor*, explores the term of feminism through her writing. She brings the reader’s emotional and attention to the supposed problem clearly and nicely. This novel talks so much about the culture where the social system that encodes sexual differences appears so much. Some parts of this novel also present about race, the group into which humans can be divided according to their physical characteristics, such as ; colour of skin, colour and type of hair, shape of eyes and shape of nose. All of those problems are familiar to people and became widely interested because it performs in life, in surrounding or may be near to one of us. It is the reason of the writer in choosing the little that is the analysis of feminism in the novel *Silent Honor*.

The problem of feminism in this novel is described by the setting of Asian country, Japan. Woman cannot choose, cannot give her opinion. People in Asian countries, seeing those conditions as the thing which stand it should be that way.

Woman suffers for a long time crying over her destiny to be the one tortured by the opposite sex, a man.

The novel *Silent Honor* presents the story about a Japanese family Masao Takashimaya who live in Kyoto, Japan. It starts by the description of Masao's wife searching which includes the family who suits him. After a long time of searching, finally Masao ends his single life marrying Hidemi, a pretty delicate small and exquisitely gentle girl. Her face looks as the finest ivory, and her eyes like shining onyx. Much of the descriptions then, are about Hidemi, as a picture of old-fashioned Japanese woman, and Hiroko, their daughter, the one who educates in both old-fashioned tradition and the modern one.

As the main character, Hiroko's story of life presents more. By the setting of World War II, in which Japanese plays the important role fighting the allies, Hiroko spends her moment of life in America. Her father sends her to study to California College. Despite of the disagreement confirms by Hidemi, who believes that woman does not need the higher education, Masao sends her to the western country, America. He wants Hiroko to be the modern woman. He hopes her to adventure the life, by studying all sciences, comprehend many languages and proves him that woman is as worthwhile as a man. Masao has a modern perception. He always teaches Hidemi many things about human right, but still Japanese is a tough people. Tradition is so dark-labeled to them. He wants Hiroko to change it. Then the story begins emotionally and beautifully.

The novel *Silent Honor* gives the reason of why the writer is interested in making this thesis. The idea of feminism in the novel attracts the writer to create

such a scientific writing in the literary works. Accordingly, the writer positively eager to search the analysis of feminism in the novel *Silent Honor* by Danielle Steel.

1.2 The Statement of Problem

Dealing with the preceding discussion, the writer presents some statements to be analyzed into these following questions :

1. What is the old Japanese culture like ?
2. How does the old Japanese culture influence on feminism ?
3. How does the World War II drive the perception of feminism ?

1.3 The Limitation of Problem

This thesis would like to focus the attention to describe the main character, Hiroko, and the culture behind her life. To be specific, this thesis will elaborate all the elements which lead the feminism in the novel *Silent Honor*, such as : the character and the setting relating to it.

1.4 The Objectives of Study

The objectives of study is to find the answer for the proposed problems through the analysis. Thus, the study is intended to :

1. Describe the old Japanese culture.
2. Analyze the influence of old Japanese culture on feminism.
3. Describe the World War II which drive the perception of feminism.

1.5 The Significances of The Study

This study attempts to give deeper understanding about human problem, especially on feminism. This study also tends to enrich the knowledge about literary work, in this case a novel *Silent Honor* by Danielle Steel. By reading the novel, people may act more wise and understanding each other. Besides, this study also intends to give better insight into race problem, the most essential human nature problem.

Furthermore, this study will be useful for the students of letters as a guidance to admire such literary work and encourage them to study more deeply concerning this work.