

**THE TRANSGRESSION TOWARD PATRIARCHY SYSTEM  
IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S SHORT STORY *NO NAME WOMAN***

**PAPER**

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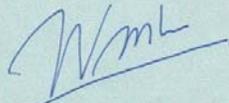
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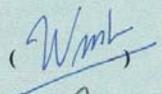
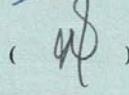
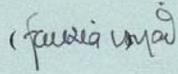
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## ABSTRAK

**Yulia, Novita. 2011. *The Transgression toward Patriarchy System in Maxine Hong Kingston's Short Story No Name Woman***

**Pembimbing: Winda Setia Sari, S.S, M, Hum.**

Thesis ini merupakan analisa cerita pendek *No Name Woman* karya Maxine Hong Kingston. Permasalahan yang dibahas dalam analisa ini adalah sejauh mana perlawanan yang dilakukan terhadap sistem patriarki (*Transgression toward Patriarchy System*) yang dilakukan oleh dua tokoh perempuan dalam cerita pendek ini dan sejauh mana character (tokoh) memberikan kontribusi dalam pengungkapan makna. Dalam hal ini, penganalisaan teks melalui character (tokoh) dilakukan berdasarkan apa yang dikatakan oleh implied author. Implied author ialah gagasan atau ide yang tersembunyi di balik teks. Tujuan penganalisaan short story ini adalah untuk mendapatkan jawaban sejauh mana short story *No Name Woman* memperlihatkan perlawanan terhadap sistem patriarki dan bagaimana implied author mendukung dalam penggalian makna. Penganalisaan short story ini juga dilakukan dengan mengaplikasikan teori female subjectivity untuk membongkar perlawanan terhadap sistem patriarki dalam cerita.

Dari penganalisaan ditemukan bahwa perlawanan terhadap sistem patriarki terlihat dari sikap dan pola pikir tokoh pertama (*first character*). Dalam short story ini terlihat bahwa *first character* sadar sepenuhnya bahwa ia hidup di dalam masyarakat yang menganut sistem patriarki. *First character* dipresentasikan oleh narrator yang tidak disebutkan namanya dalam short story. Melalui ucapan dan pemikirannya, narrator memperlihatkan penolakan dan perlawanannya terhadap sistem patriarki. Ia juga memandang rendah, sinis dan mengecam masyarakat patriarki. Sementara *second character* (tokoh kedua) juga menunjukkan sikap perlawanannya terhadap masyarakat patriarki. Ia melanggar segala aturan dalam masyarakat patriarki. Setelah menikah dengan sistem perjodohan, tokoh kedua melakukan perselingkuhan dan hamil. Hal itu mengundang kemarahan dari masyarakat patriarki, namun ia kukuh dengan pilihannya, dan memutuskan untuk bunuh diri bersama bayinya yang juga seorang perempuan. Hal itu menunjukkan bahwa ia ingin memutus mata rantai perlakuan buruk patriarki terhadap kaum perempuan. Fenomena yang terungkap dalam short story ini membuktikan bahwa perempuan-perempuan yang berada dalam masyarakat patriarki selalu melakukan usaha-usaha untuk melawan sistem patriarki.

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background of Study**

Each society possesses different ideology. One of ideology in society is patriarchal ideology. It is kind of social system in which the role of father is central to social organization, and where father hold authority over women, children and property. According to Gardá Lerner in *The Creation of Patriarchy* (1986), the control of male family heads over their female kin and minor sons was as important to the existence of the society as was the control of the king over his soldier.

Patriarchy differs women and men position into unequal. The unequal position formulates by patriarchal society. Men will be at first position, and have privilege in many crucial aspects; however women will be at the second position and treated to be submissive. Women have no influence in the society. That means they have no any privilege in the public space. They are treated to be dependent community in the aspect of economy, social, politic, and psychology especially in marriage institution. Women activity is only belonging to private area, giving service to her husband, and being a mother for her children. The condition gives big chance for men to dominate women. Women are seen to be the object, constructed by patriarchal society. This case can be seen in the system that women must follow.

In the patriarchal society, there is a part of the patriarchy system that should be obeyed by women and men. It is named stereotype. Commonly, stereotype is defines as something positive, however, in patriarchal society, stereotype defines as negative things that created for women and men. In the stereotype, women should behave like ideal women (beautiful, passive, submissive, dependent, and short minded). On the other hand, men should behave like ideal man (stronger, decision maker, independent and leader). Those stereotypes belong to patriarchy system. It marginalized women position in society. Women can not decide their life or future. They just wait for men and live in the complicated system.

The problem that faced by women for many centuries are clustered around the same issues, they don't have awareness and have no ability to choose. In china, during the First World War, women did not allow to decide what they want to do. They have no chance to go outside, low status, and have no right to go to school. Everything is under men control, including the decision for marriage and reproduction.

The same case is also continually happened in twentieth century. In America, women still can not make decision for their life. It happened almost to every woman, especially those who come from immigrant community. They always spaced in the difficult situation (identity, carrier, and family). In some cases, if women decide something without men's notes, society will reject them automatically.

Nowadays, there are some women that are aware of their position in society. They realize that society has been treated them unequally. Women believe that they have equal position in the society. They parted to prove that women can exist in the society without depending on men. Therefore, they try to build awareness and head toward choice in their life. Moreover when they try to stand against patriarchy system, patriarchal society will claim their action as transgression. It is like trying to overthrow structures of authority of patriarchal society.

The act of transgression can be seen in women ability to exist in the space that dominated by men. Women are seen to be the object that related to their passive personality, which means that they will not be able to be independent, educated, and they can not make decision for themselves. Therefore, women have to break the system of patriarchy that marginalized women position in the society. The effort to transgress the system of patriarchy is shown through women ability to make choice. In the system of patriarchy, women should obey every rule that has been created for them. They can not transgress or against that rules. They constructed as inferior. Automatically, women have no chance to pursue their right in life. However, when women can head toward their choice, they will be able to gain their right. They can decide what kind of life that they want to pursue. Heading toward choice is kinds of effort to transgress the ignorance toward women.

The phenomenon of the transgression toward patriarchy system does not only occur in real world. It also can be found in literary work. One of literary

works that explore the transgression toward patriarchy system is *No Name Woman*, a short story which is written by Maxine Hong Kingston. The women in this short story use their awareness in defining their own identity. They also try to decide what they want to do in life. Thus, in the short story, characters show their existence in patriarchal society. They believe that they can put away the patriarchy system from their life. They prove that they could define their identity as independent women. That is why this short story is appealing to be analyzed.

### **1.1.1 The Transgression toward Patriarchy System**

Transgression refers to the act of overstepping a boundary, especially the law. A transgressor is the person who breaks the rules or law. Highwater in Ceylan Erturing (2007) said that transgression is the act of crossing a metaphysical boundary, a conceptual barrier, a venturing into the new world, and rebellious act that breaks down conceptual barriers.

In this analysis, the transgression exists in patriarchal society. According to Julia Kristeva in Soe Tjen Marching (2004), transgression becomes a social and political revolution, which means that it has the possibility to transform the original rules into a new set of rules. In this third stage, transgression has become revolutionary.

In this study, the notion of transgression will be connected to the concept of patriarchy system that has been existed from time to time. Based on definition on Judith Bannet in Gardiner (2007), patriarchy is the central problem of women's

history, and even on the greatest general problems of all history. Patriarchy is position of sovereign males over dependent females.

In addition Stacey in Asiyanbola (2005) stated that patriarchy structure has been a major failure of the traditional society. It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables women to dominate. To make it clear, patriarchy system is a kind of concept that kept women in the low position. It can be stated that the transgression toward patriarchy system is related to women effort to break every rules that created by patriarchy. Women try to show their existence and their ability to against the system.

To conclude, the transgression toward patriarchy system in this study deals with women rebellion to the system of patriarchy. Woman who transgress the system use their awareness to define their identity in society, and women show that they have choice in life and become independent.

### **1.1.2 A Brief of Maxine Hong Kingston**

Maxine Hong Kingston was born in Stockton on October 27, 1940. She is first generation Chinese immigrant in California. Her father, Tom, is a laundry worker and gambling house owner. Her mother, Yin Lan Hong, is practitioner of medicine. Tom left China in 1924 and he was able to bring his wife to California over in 1939.

Kingston was drawn to writing at a young age and won a five dollar prize from *Girl Scout Magazine*. For an essay she wrote entitled *I Am an American*. She majored in engineering at Berkeley before switching to English. After

relocating to Hawaii in 1967 Maxine began writing extensively finally completing and publishing her first novel, *The Woman Warrior: Memoir of a Girlhood among Ghosts*, which discusses gender and ethnicity and how these concepts affect the lives of women.

Kingston has received several awards for her contributions to Chinese American Literature. *The Woman Warrior* (1976), awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, and *China Men* (1980), which was awarded the 1981 National Book Award. A documentary produced by Gayle K. Yamada, *Maxine Hong Kingston: Talking Story*, was released in 1990. Featuring notable Asian American authors such as Amy Tan and David Henry Hwang, it explored Kingston's life, paying particular attention to her commentary on cultural heritage and both sexual and racial oppression. The production was awarded the CINE Golden Eagle in 1990. Kingston also participated in the production of Bill Moyers' PBS historical documentary, *Becoming American: The Chinese Experience*.

*Woman Warrior* (1976) is one of Kingston work that admired by many critics. One of short story that belongs to that novel is *No Name Woman*. It is a short story that explore about woman issue. Many people gives praises and comment to this short story. John Hansen (2009) stated that:

Kingston is trying to stand-out. She does not want to be the same as every other Chinese-American girl. This may shed light on a personal connection with her aunt. That is, her aunt was not conforming to the social norm and standards. She is supposed to get married, have

children, support her husband, and at no point ever discuss the topic of sexual relations. This instance shows Kingston's continued struggle between Americanization and her traditional Chinese culture.

This statement reflects that Kingston writing try to prove the universalism of woman issue. Traditional woman is ruled by a system. Woman should behave as social standard. However, Kingston tries to cross that idea. In her short story she shows that the character of the short story try struggle in life and transgress the boundaries.

### **1.1.3. *No Name Woman***

*No Name Woman* is written by Maxine Hong Kingston, exposes the transgression toward patriarchy system. It is kind of effort to avoid the oppression which is done by patriarchal society. Actually, transgression can be done by men and women, however, in this short story the transgression is done by women. It is represented by the characters. The first character is the narrator, an emigrant from China who lives in America and the second character is unnamed aunt, who lives in China. They live in the different place and different time, however they face the issue of patriarchy system which is treated woman as the second community in the society. The characters of the short story show that they could break the system of patriarchy. The characters show their ability to transgress patriarchy system through building awareness and heading toward choice in their life.

Building the awareness is one way to transgress patriarchy system. The first character, narrator, is aware that her life is controlled by men. In *No Name Woman*, narrator realizes that living in America does not a guaranty to get

equality in life especially for emigrant woman. Moreover, her life not only controlled by society but also controlled by her parents, who still believed in traditional ideology, that is patriarchy system. Therefore, through her thought, narrator confronts every idea about the system of patriarchy that always taught by her parents. She insult the way of her family treated her unnamed aunt. She rejects her mother thought who blamed her unnamed aunt as a sinner in the society and she has her own opinion to define her aunty.

Heading toward choice describes the transgression toward patriarchy system. In patriarchy system, woman is defined as a submissive that can not make decision in her life. However, the second character, unnamed aunt in *No Name Woman* can break this concept by strict to her decision. She actually disagree of arrange marriage that being a custom in the country where she is belongs to. In her real life, she absolutely followed family rules, but in her sullenness she decided to against that system. She decides to build relationship affair with a man who does not her own husband. It is kind of her rejection toward the norms that ruled in society. Unnamed aunt choose not to mention her inseminator when the society know that she is being pregnant as the result of her adultery. She gives birth alone and without any help. It shows that she try to reconstructed the idea of patriarchy about dependent women to be independent women. In patriarchy view, her behavior could be seen as transgressor but in the other side it is her own way to get her own happiness and cut the chain of patriarchy system off.

## **1.2. Problem of Study**

There are many issues that can be exposed in Maxine Hong Kingston's short story *No Name Woman*. However, the transgression toward patriarchy system appears to be the main focus in the short story. Building awareness and heading toward choice, is the way to transgress patriarchy system. Thus research question are:

1. How far does Maxine Hong Kingston's short story expose the meaning of the transgression toward patriarchy system?
2. To what extent do fictional devices such as character and setting give contribution to expose the transgression toward patriarchy system?

### **1.3. Purpose of Study**

This study intended to find out how far and Maxine Hong Kingston's short stories, *No name Woman* evokes the transgression toward patriarchy system. This is also done to find out to what extent character and setting give contribution in showing the meaning the transgression toward patriarchy system.

### **1.4. Previous Study**

The analysis about these short stories is focusing on the transgression toward patriarchy system issue has not been found yet. However, there are some studies in thesis and book that have given contribution and inspiration in analyzing these short stories through the transgression toward patriarchy system.

The first analysis is *Recasting India: Caste, Trauma, and the Politic of Transgression*, in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Thing*. This thesis is written

by Yu-Ru Chu. In her thesis, Chu discusses about the life of people who live in post colonial era in India. There are two characters that belong to this novel, Ammu and Velutha. Ammu is falling in love with Velutha, who has high caste than Ammu. Society rejects their relationship because they come from different caste. At the time, society has big influence to define the relationship between men and women. However, Ammu does not care with the rules, she tries hard to pursue her happiness even she get the big consequences of her action, the church refuse to bury her. In this analysis, Ammu has show that she has an effort to transgress the system in her society. From this analysis, it can be perceived that the character of this novel present her struggle to against social system. The analysis of the novel focuses on fictional devices, character and setting. Chu uses the idea of subaltern studies to analyze this novel.

The other study that gives contribution to this study is written by Maria Rosa Dalla Costa and Selma James. They write a book with titled *The Power of Women and the Subversion of Community*. In their book, they try to expose how women are defined by the society. They also discuss about some of efforts that women can do to against patriarchy system that treated women as the second community. They explain that women should explore themselves to define their existence in society. Women also should go to school, because educated women will build awareness and have ability to make any decision for their life. In addition, this book is kind of persuasive, try to open women minded; women should against the system of patriarchy.

Both of analyses have inspired the study of the transgression toward patriarchy system. It is different from previous study, this analysis focuses on transgression toward patriarchy system through building awareness, and heading toward choice emphasizing on the analysis of setting and character.

### **1.5. Theoretical Framework**

The analysis of this short story related to the concept of female subjectivity by Simone De Beauvoir. Female subjectivity opposes the concept of patriarchy system. In this system, every woman in the world should follow system that created by patriarchy society. Woman become submissive and become the object. Therefore, the feminist who are againsts the concept determine woman to be the subject of their life, not the object anymore.

The topic of being the subject has become the point concerned by feminist movement. It includes women capability to define their meaning as the subject. De beavoir in Musset (2003) stated that *he is the subject and she is the other*, subject is absolute and the other is inessential object. For De Beauvoir, inessential means, one is not born as a woman but rather becoming a woman. It can be perceived that De Beauvoir demands woman to realize that the demands of being the object is only the construction of the society. Thus, woman should be the subject, eventhough it is contradicted with patriarchy system. In addition, Judith Butler in Long (1999) says being the object means the act of performing that contend the sense of independent and self governing. Hence, the woman who want to be the subject must be the doer and manage their own life.

The categories of being the subject can be performed into different ways. According to Gagnier in Hall (2004) there are two categories of being the subjects: firstly, a subject to itself, an “I”, which means the comprehension of “I” can be seen from its own view points. Secondly, the subject of knowledge, it is connected to the discourse of social institutions that circumscribe its term of being. Those categories will contribute to the women’s existence in the society.

The analysis of this short story is related to the concept of subaltern position in society by Gayatri Spivak. Spivak in Childs (1993) stated that woman in the third world is colonized by their own culture. This statement signifies that culture has made social limitation for woman. Thus, patriarchy is a part of culture.

The form of this analysis is text-based interpretation. Guerin (1999:17) says that text-based interpretation is focused on the analysis on the work itself. The process of this analysis ignore the aspects outer the text. It means that the meaning is found from the text by showing the interrelationship of elements of the text. The elements of the text include theme, plot, characterization, setting and point of view.

The process of this analysis is done by examining its fictional devices. It focuses on character and setting. Character is one of the important elements in fiction. The character is medium that the reader needs to examine the meaning in literary works. It is supported by Wheeler (1999) who stated that careful readers note each character’s attitude and thought, action and reaction, as well as any language that reveals geographic, social, or culture background. The characters in

these short stories are narrator and unnamed aunt who tried to transgress the patriarchy system.

Another important element that can help in the process of analyzing of this short story is setting. Setting does not only mean “place and time” in the short story, but also the atmosphere of the story. Moreover, Kate Endriga (2003) argues that:

Setting has a way of drawing the reader into a piece of literature while facilitating understanding of the characters and their action.

From the sentence above, it suggest that setting can give big effect on character. The transgression toward patriarchy system through building awareness and heading toward choice become setting in this analysis. This setting will help in the process of characterization.

## **1.6. Methodology**

The analysis of these short stories focuses on analyzing the fictional devices: setting and character. Both character and setting are inseparable because they are interrelated each other. In the analyzing the character, it will provide the conflicts in the character and describe their action and thought to face it. Then setting deals with atmosphere, giving contribution in the process of analysis giving help to reveal the meaning. Moreover, these elements are analyzed based on the idea of female subjectivity by Simone De Beauvoir.