



**THE IMPACT OF OPPRESSION IN CHINA IN 1949
TOWARDS CHINESE MOTHERS CHARACTERS
AS REPRESENTED IN AMY TAN'S SHORT STORY**

TWO KINDS

a final project

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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by

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TAN'S SHORT STORY "TWO KINDS"**

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Demikian, surat pernyataan ini dibuat agar dapat digunakan seperlunya.

Semarang, 16 April 2011
Yang membuat pernyataan

Siti Farikhah

One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.

(Simone De Beauvoir)



To:

**My beloved parents Ayanah and Nafian,
Claudia and Mas Sigit, Mr Buono**

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After all, the writer realizes that there are still many shortcomings in this final project, so that the writer wishes that the next coming researchers will conduct better research related to the topic in this final project.

The writer hopes this final project can bring benefits to all readers and the next researchers. Amien.

Semarang, 16th April 2011

Siti Farikhah

ABSTRACT

Siti Farikhah. 2011. *The Impact of The Oppression in China in 1949 Towards Chinese Mothers Characters as Represented in Amy Tan's Short Story "Two Kinds"*. Final Project, English Department, Languages and Arts Faculty of Semarang State University, First Advisor: Drs. Amir Sisbiyanto, M.Hum, Second Advisor: Dra. Rini Susanti W., S.S, M.Hum.

Keywords: Impact, Oppression in China in 1949, Chinese Mothers Characters

Nowadays, The People's Republic of Cina (PRC) is another country besides United States of America (USA) which becomes the super power country seen from the progress of many aspects of life, especially in economics. Thus, it is interesting to conduct the research related to this country. Behind the fast progress of China, in fact this country has a long historical background when its people underwent hundreds years of difficulty, not to mention in 1949, the first time Communism is initiated by Mao Tse Tung. The characters of Suyan as the representation of Chinese mothers who moved to America in 1949 described in Amy Tan's short story "Two Kinds".

The objectives of the study are: to find out the Chinese mothers' character as represented in "Two Kinds" short story and to discover the impacts of oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character as represented in "Two Kinds" short story.

The write collected the data through some steps, they were: first, reading and finding the research problem, second was searching the related references from books and internet, the third was finding and selecting data from the short story, and the last the writer tried to find out the impact of oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers characters as is represented in "Two Kinds" short story. The writer used theory of new criticism and feminism and the theory of oppression. Those were taken from books, journals, and articles from internet which are related to the topic in this research.

From this study, the writer found that despite the fast progress brought by the Chinese Revolution in 1949, it also brings impact towards Chinese mothers characters who used to be obedient, dependent, and had limited freedom in society becomes the modern Chinese women who were independent, risk takers, optimistic, strict and ambitious. Furthermore, there are two impacts of oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character as represented in "Two Kinds" short story, they are the way chinese mothers educate their children which still follow Confusianism and use force as the mean to achieve their purpose. The second impact is changing Chinese mothers becoming rude.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background of the Study

In this era, China or what is called People's Republic of Cina is another country besides United States of America (USA) which becomes the super power country seen from the progress of many aspects of life, especially in economics. As what is written by Robert Ray Britt, many people and experts predict that China will soon supplant United States to be the world's premiere super power country. (<http://www.livescience.com>, accessed in 6th February 2010)

Along the history of China, China has undergone hundreds years of difficult period when its people struggle hard in order to survive. In the book *Communist China's Policy of Oppression in East Turkestan* Harun Yahya (2003) explains for hundreds years since China established the Communist Party which become the only dominant party in Chinese administration, there have been many significant changes in all regions of China. Among all of these changes, the cultural change is the most important issue that is often debated in international world.

Many religions in China have been living under difficult circumstances and suffering because of the Cultural Revolution which forces all of the people in China to live under one ideology, that is communism. Thus, with the existence of the Cultural Revolution, it is not possible for the communities that used to practice

their religions to continue doing activities according to what they have believed for a long time.

There are two examples of big religions having serious conflict with the government of China, they are Islam represented by Muslims community in East Turkestan and Buddhism represented by Buddhists in Tibet. Both East Turkestan and Tibet have been claimed as the part of Chinese territory though in the historical root, the two regions had ever noted as separated territories, not belonging to the territory of China. The following quotation describes the statement above;

China's restrictions on Islam follow a similar pattern as other religious restrictions. While it is not overtly illegal to be a Muslim in China, the government has made it difficult. Some restrictions by the Communist party of China declare that sermons run no longer than a half-hour, the Koran cannot be taught in private, and residents of China may not travel to Mecca by any means other than government-run tours. (<http://www.suite101.com/content/buddhism-and-islam-in-china>, accessed in 4th February 2010)

Until now these two religious community still have the serious conflict with the government of China since they reject living under the Communism which by all means has such fundamental differences against their beliefs. Instead of abiding Communism, they keep practicing their religions regardless of many religious places such as mosques and monasteries have been destroyed by the Red Guard, the official staffs of Communist government which work to succeed communism campaign . Moreover, as the real protest to the government of China, a huge number of Tibetan moved to another country like India to form their own government and Buddhist society in exile, separating from Chinese government, as supported by the statement; "Following in the footsteps of the [14th Dalai Lama](#)

more than 150,000 Tibetan refugees have fled to India during the past 50 years. He left with his initial entourage in 1959, following an abortive [uprising](#) of disputed motivations.” (<http://www.suite101.com/content/buddhism-and-islam-in-china>, accessed in 4th February 2010)

The facts above show that there is a big trouble with Cultural Revolution though it was one of the most important programs of Communist administration in People’s Republic of China (PRC) widely campaigned in 1949.

When there is an ideology dominated in a state which consist of plural society with their plural traditional cultures and different beliefs, the society with different ideologies will be insecure and in fear. In spite of the regions belong to a state’s territory, the people will never be able to be united. Furthermore, when this domination is supported by the use of force or coercion, it will create violence with a political motive or what so-called “political oppression” (<http://www.wikipedia.org>).

The oppression that an individu feels can affect to someone’s life so that someone will protest against that power in various ways. One of them is by moving to another place which is considered to be more peaceful place to live and to build a new life. It is like what is done by many of Tibetans.

Almost similar to Tibetan, in this final project the writer would like to analyze the condition of a Chinese mother who finally moved to America in 1949, after losing everything she had, including her twins babies. Regardless of the religions case, the writer sees that the motive of the immigration of a Chinese

mother in the short story of *Two Kinds* to America is to live in a more secure place and to get better future.

No wonder that America becomes the destination country to where many people immigrate because America has been well-known since a long time ago as a promising country which welcome many immigrants coming from many different countries in the world. It is closely related to American history.

One of the most important stories in American history is the story of immigration and diversity. It is because most of the Americans either the American people now or their ancestors are actually immigrants who come from many different countries in the world. "Despite the fact that the Native Americans are Indians, nowadays they are only about two million people or one percent of all American population. "(Suzanne, 2007:22)

The reason why immigration becomes an important topic in American history is because the existence of "Melting Pot" myth. It doesn't mean that melting pot is only a myth, but it is a metaphor that is approved by Americans which means people from many different countries with their different cultures come together to America and they say the pledge of allegiance, melting into common culture, working and struggle together in order to make a better future for America. The supporting quotation is stated below:

The melting pot is a metaphor for a [heterogeneous](#) society becoming more [homogeneous](#), the different elements "melting together" into a harmonious whole with a common culture. It is particularly used to describe the [assimilation](#) of immigrants to the [United States](#); the melting-together metaphor was in use by the 1780s. (<http://www.wikipedia.org>, accessed in 9th January 2011)

The existence of Melting Pot myth causes both some benefits and difficulties. One of the benefits is the independent and flexible character of Americans. It is because at first, immigrating to a new place with much different kind of people and cultures consequently required individual power and capability in order to be survived. It led every American to utilize and optimalize what they could do, not depending on others. Furthermore, in realizing their dreams for the better future of America, they must be flexible when facing other immigrants who are naturally different from them.

In the further development of social and culture in America, melting pot changed into *mosaic* or *salad bowl* which means having different cultures but they are not melting. Every identity keeps maintaining their uniqueness and typicality, as stated in the quotation as follows.

After 1970 the desirability of assimilation and the melting pot model was by proponents of [multiculturalism](#), who assert that cultural differences within society are valuable and should be preserved, proposing the alternative metaphor of the [mosaic](#) or [salad bowl](#) – different cultures mix, but remain distinct.

(<http://www.wikipedia.org>, accessed in January 2011)

The characters of Americans which are independent and flexible make them brave in facing many problems and challenges in life. They want to take risks when they want to get or achieve something. “The American people have been noted for their willingness to take risks and try new things, for their independence and aspects of their native cultures with them.” (Suzanne, 2007:22).

The influence of cultures from where the immigrant came from could be seen from many different identities, such as Black Americans, Hispanic

Americans and Chinese American. The last one will be further discussed in this final project.

Many writers wrote about the story of immigrants in America. One of the writers who belongs to the writers in American modern literature is Amy Tan. She is a Chinese American writer who wrote many works about the American immigrants from China.

One of Amy Tan's important works is a short story entitled *Two Kinds*. It portrays the psychological effect of socio historical background of a mother who was born and grown up in China in the difficult situation of Cultural Revolution in 1949 towards her relationship with her daughter who grew up in America in the time when freedom is upheld in all aspects of life.

In this final project, the writer tries to find and analyze the root of the tense relationship between a Chinese American mother and her daughter. The hypothesis that the writer make in advance is that there is an impact of the oppression in China during The Cultural Revolution in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character as represented in Amy Tan's short story *Two Kinds* .

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

The reason why the writer chooses this topic is because for all these time many scientific papers about *Two Kinds* short story that have been written are always discussed about the relationship between a Chinese mother and her daughter using psychological approach. None of them relates to the socio historical background of China in 1949, the time of Cultural Revolution under the Communism

administration in which ruthlessness was legally done and human rights were easily violated for hundred years.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The problems in this final project are the following:

- (1) What Chinese mothers' characters are described in *Two Kinds* short story.
- (2) What social traces found in *Two Kinds* short story describing the impacts of the oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' characters.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- a. To find out the Chinese mothers' character as represented in *Two Kinds* short story
- b. To discover the social traces describing the impacts of the oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character as represented in *Two Kinds* short story.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is as one of the references for those who want to broaden knowledge about the Chinese mothers' character and the impacts of oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character described in *Two Kinds* short story written by Amy Tan.

1.6 Outline of the Report

The outline of the study is as the following:

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of the background of the study, the reason for choosing the topic, the problem statement, the objective of conducting the research, the significance of the study and the outline of the study report.

Chapter II is review of related literature. It discusses the literature concepts that relates to the topic of discussion. It consists of review of previous study, the history of People's Republic of China, Chinese people, Chinese women, Amy Tan's biography and frame work of analysis.

Chapter III is method of investigation. It consists of the research methodology that will be conducted covering data, the object of the study, type of the research, data and data source, procedure of the research and method of analyzing the data.

Chapter IV is the result of the study. It discusses the analysis of the data taken from the source. It consist of the Chinese mothers' character as represented in *Two Kinds* short story and the impact of oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion. It consists of the conclusion of the study and the suggestion from the writer.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into six sub chapters, they are: review of previous study, the history of People's Republic of China (PRC), Chinese people, Chinese women, Amy Tan's biography, and frame work of analysis.

2.1. Review of Previous Study

There are several previous final projects which discuss about the topic related to this final project. Some of them are the following.

Devi Nurul Paramita (2006:76) in *The Impacts of Parents' Ambition in Developing Child's Talent Toward Child's Development As Reflected in Tan's Two Kinds*. It discusses about three factors cause parent's ambition to shape her daughter to be a prodigy, they are parent's background, parent's motivation and parent's action. Furthermore, the impacts of parent's ambition toward her daughter are daughter's suffering, conflict and daughter's grudge toward parent. Meanwhile, the moral values are first, parents should not be too ambitious in forcing their children to be someone that children do not want to be because children are not parent's possession; we must be aware in treating and educating our children; we must not easily give up in reaching our goal; and children have to give a good respect toward parent.

Achmad Azhar (2010:70) in Chinese Diaspora in Soo Cham's *A Mother's Tears* Novel states that Soo Cham's *A Mother's Tears* novel which portrays Chinese Diaspora where Chinese people cannot run their original culture fully in their daily life in their immigration country. It is caused by the host ethnic's domination Malay. In immigration country, Chinese people experience a culture changing of their culture in term of rituals of Chinese religions or beliefs, Chinese fashion, Chinese cuisine taste, and Chinese social interaction in Malaysia. They become quite different from original Chinese culture in China.

According to Azhar , the factors causing Chinese Diaspora shown in the novel are war, poverty and famine. War in the 19th century forced many Chinese people immigrated to other countries to get a worthy life. Then Malaysia became one of the destination countries to immigrate. In spite of many obstacles both from inside and outside China, many Chinese people had proven that they could emigrate from China and being successful in the countries to where they immigrate.

The secret behind their success is Chinese ability in trading and self defence. The examples of their self defence are keeping silent to avoid a conflict, being polite to everyone, using Chinese name, and using Chinese language wherever they are, including in their immigration countries.

Sudarti (2005:78) in *The Aspects of Mother's Failure in Educating Her Children As Reflected in Tony Devaney Morinelli's The Sins of The Mother* discusses about some aspects of a mother's failure in educating her children, they are: moral behavior, attitude, education, and environment. From moral behavior

aspect, Marie, the name of the mother in the drama analyzed is an alcoholic mother and she has experience free sex too. These bad habits affect her mentality so that she can neither take care of her children wholeheartedly nor control her emotion when there is a problem. From her attitude, Marie's wrong attitude gives bad influence to the development of her children. Next, from education aspect, Marie doesn't have high education that influences her way of thinking, and the last aspect from environment, Marie is in fact grown up in an unharmonious family so that her character is emotional and unharmonious.

Andi Fajar Sutrisno (2008:82) in *The Concept of American Dream Found in The Toxicity Album* by System of A Down states that American Dream is a basic concept of the American philosophy to reach a better life. Americans believe that they dream can be true if they struggle for it.

According to this final project, there are five concepts of the American Dream which are recognized by the world, they are the concept of freedom, equality, prosperity, individualism, and democracy.

Devi Nurul Paramita (2008:60) in *Cross Cultural Conflict Presented by John Grisham in the Novel A Time To Kill* explains that differences in culture can lead to either destruction or development. There are two factors causing cultural conflict, they are ethnocentrism, a belief that "my culture is the best culture" and stereotype, a belief that what someone represents what people from the same culture.

From the five previous studies reviewed above, the writer concludes that China is a country whose people have strong stereotype wherever they are, either

in their own country or in immigration countries where they move to, in the case of Chinese diaspora which mostly is the impact of war, famine, and poverty. In spite of this strong stereotype, Chinese people undergo cultural change in their immigration country because after emigrating from China, it is not possible to purely practice their Chinese culture due to the host ethnic's domination. Furthermore, the role of Chinese mothers in educating their children is very important in the immigration country. In line with their struggle to get a better life as the concept of American Dream, they must treat and educate their children well, avoiding any conflict which may hamper their main goals as Chinese mothers. The conflict between Chinese mothers and their children may have basically two factors, they are Chinese mothers' background and the cross cultural understanding between Chinese mothers and their children.

In the next sub chapters, the writer would like to explain about some important information related to the topic discussed in this final project.

2.2 The History of People's Republic of China (PRC)

Since Mao Tse Tung came to power as the leader of China, Communism has become the only ideology which was legally used in all aspects of life in China and the name of China was changed into People's Republic of China.

According to Wikipedia, the history of China is often divided distinctly by the historians into "Mao era" and "the post Mao". The "Mao era" lasted from the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on October 1, 1949 to Deng

Xiaoping onto power and policy reversal at the Third Plenum of the eleventh Party Congress on December 22, 1978.

During his administration, Mao implemented some social movements; they were Land Reform, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution. Land reform was the major focus of the policy as a result of China's vast rural population. Ninety percent of the population in China was farmers, as quoted below;

Lands of former landlords were confiscated by the government and subsequently redistributed to the lower-class peasants. Peasants were classified into different categories, from landlord to "poor peasants". As a period of social revolution, Mao wiped out the old landlord class, and gradually equalized the wealth gap in the remaining classes. In rural China, political movements against landlords caused the humiliation and death of many former land owners.

Though Mao Tse Tung claimed to lead a coalition government which consisted of fourteen separated political parties, but the country was run by the Communist Party. The majority of local and national of leaders in the police, the army, and the civilian organization were Communist administrator. As a matter of fact, PRC is totalitarian regime. Its entire executive and legislative are tied to one single organ, Communist Party.

Since Communist Party came to power, it has controlled all aspects of life in China. Therefore, it is difficult to deviate from communist ideology in political and social life. Every thought, beliefs, and actions must be in line with the rule of Communism. Orelse, the people who practice it will be heavily punished or imprisoned.

In Harun Yahya (2009:98), A British journalist who was also an expert of China, John Mirsky described the rule of Communism,” ...But to them (Communist Party), stability meant an order and the Communist Party were incontestably in charge. Any threat to that would have to be met with what they wielded most effectively: force.”

The other programs of Mao Tse Tung which were very striking were “The Great Leap Forward” and “The Cultural Revolution”. The first program namely the Great Leap Forward was a new economic program aimed at rapidly raising industrial and agricultural production. In addition, Mao announced the goal of surpassing the steel production output of Great Britain. Within a year, almost all Chinese villages had been reformed into working communes which consisted of several thousands of people in size. This society lived and worked together as envisioned by Mao Tse Tung with an ideal Marxist society.

The results of The Great Leap Forward program, however, were hedisastrous and even caused millions of people died. The condition is described by Wikipedia as the following.

Normal market mechanisms were disrupted, agricultural production fell behind, and Mainland's people exhausted themselves producing shoddy, unsellable goods. Because of the reliance on the government providing and distributing food and resources and their rapid depletion due to poor planning, starvation appeared even in fertile agricultural areas. From 1960 to 1961, the combination of poor planning during the Great Leap Forward, political movements incited by the government, as well as unusual weather patterns and natural disasters resulted in widespread famine and many deaths. According to various sources, the resulting death toll was likely between 20 and 40 million.

After the disasters of The Great Leap Forward, Mao’s stature in the view of Chinese society and political oppositions was decreased. He was also subject to

criticism within the Central Committee. Right afterwards, President Liu Shaoqi and Party General Secretary Deng Xiaoping took over direction of the party and adopted pragmatic policies and disbanded communes. Being unsatisfied with the new policy and authority, Mao then implemented a new program, the second program namely “The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” or simply called the Cultural Revolution. It was in theory class struggles that were incomplete from the last revolution. With the coming of this program, Mao and his supporters from “liberal bourgeoisie” and “capitalist roaders” continued to dominate the society by having the highest positions in the Communist Party. They fought against the opposition groups in the government, lead to the massive social, political, cultural, and economic chaos which lasted for around ten years.

In order to be successful in spreading out the Communist ideology, Mao formed The Cultural Revolution Committee. Local party organizations, government, work units, and other institutions were replaced those respective Cultural Revolution Committee. During this period, there were also youth organizations consist of those who strongly believed that they were “assisting in the revolution”. These organizations were called The Red Guards.

The revolution particular targets were educated individuals and intellectuals. Those who were known by The Red Guards for not learning by heart the marching songs of Communism or not carrying the Little Red Book as the compulsory book from Mao Tse Tung would be ruthlessly punished or killed in front of public. Harun Yahya (2009:101) states: “During the Cultural Revolution,

tens of thousands of teachers, politicians, and artists were tortured and killed by The Red Guards.”

In line with The Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1968 Mao emphasized “the destruction of The Four Olds”, they are the renunciation of old norms and feudal traditions and the denunciation of all kinds of ideologies which countered The Cultural Revolution program. Among these ideologies were Confucianism, imperial traditions, “superstitions” from folk religions, belief or ethnic minorities, and organized religion. The example of this strict regulation can be seen from the case in Tibet where thousands of the followers of Buddha were tortured and thus, many of them fled to other countries. As what happened in Tibet, the Muslim community in East Turkestan had also similar treatment. They were not given the freedom to do their religious practices. As the result of the Chinese government hatred to such religious beliefs were many monasteries in Tibet and mosques in East Turkestan were destroyed by the government.

2. 3 Chinese People

In the article “Chinese Personality Traits and Characters”, Jeffrey Hays (2008) explains there are common traits and characters of Chinese people which can be known from generation to generation of Chinese people. Among the personality traits and characters of Chinese are as the following.

2.3.1 Loosing Face and Keeping one’s word

The Chinese are very conscious of face. Face is essentially respect in a community and is a crucial underpinning of society. Loss of that respect threatens

the relations of individuals with almost everyone in his or her world and is hard to get back once lost, and thus must be avoided at all costs.

Face is called "mianzi" in mandarin, which can also be translated to mean dignity, prestige and reputation. It has been said that "face is more important than truth or justice." Losing face is often people's worst fear. Chinese go out of their way to be polite and accommodating, to maintain dignity in a variety of situations and to avoid disputes, conflicts and embarrassment in their pursuit to avoid losing face.

The government often uses social pressure in the form of face-losing criticism to keep people in line with issues such as having extra children or complaining about the government (the threat of imprisonment is also used).

Maintaining face and avoiding losing face are important concepts in the West too. However, as Scott Seligman, author of *Chinese Business Etiquette, Manners and Culture in the Peoples Republic of China* tells that the Chinese raise face to a high art.

Chinese also value loyalty and stress the importance of keeping one's word. Discretion is greatly valued. It is tied with humility and not causing others to lose face.

2.3.2 Shyness, Modesty and Embarrassment

Chinese often appear shy and self conscious to Westerners, especially when they are around foreigners or are in situations which they are not used to. Chinese don't

like to be separated from crowd, stared at or asked too many personal questions (even though they often stare at and ask personal questions of Westerners).

Chinese often smile or giggle when a sensitive subject is broached or they feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. When young Chinese are asked if they have a girlfriend they usually laugh and look away.

Successful Chinese are often very modest. Most of super rich Chinese are publicity-shy. They rarely grant interviews and little is known about them. They are not like any other super rich people from other countries who are known by people around the world from TV, magazines, newspaper or internet.

2.3.3 Formality, Punctuality, and Apologizing

Chinese tend to be very formal. Their formality persists until one is allowed on the inside of their group, which is something that usually takes place over time and requires following established protocol and recognizing hierarchies and showing proper respect to achieve.

Apologizing is important in China. The methods, manners and the ways it is carried out is affected by the rank and identity of the person doing the apologizing and the person being apologized to and is often conducted in a way that is difficult for Westerners to unravel and comprehend.

Chinese find it difficult and humiliating to apologize to someone face to face. Sometimes they refuse to apologize even when they know they are wrong. Refusing to apologize causes great harm because of concerns about losing face.

Chinese have a strong sense of punctuality. They like to be on time in every agenda that they have.

2.3.4 Indirectness, Uncertainty and Lying

Chinese can also be very indirect, sometimes painfully so, especially when talking about something that bothers them or may cause them to look bad. Chinese, for example, consider it rude to ask for something directly and tend to avoid using questions that have a yes or no answer to avoid putting someone in the position where he or she might have to give an answer he or she does not want to give or hurt someone's feelings. Even inquiring about directions can be perceived as impolite because the person who is asked directions may not know where the place is and this could cause them to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable.

The Chinese do a great deal of communication through symbolic expression, hints and allusions, expecting listeners and readers to grasp the meaning by reading between the lines. The Chinese like to say, "He who says the least says the most." Chinese thinking is different from Western thinking. Westerners try to get at things very clearly, asking what, why and how much. Chinese are more interested in dealing with things using metaphors or intuitive comparisons.

Chinese have a high tolerance for uncertainty. Many feel comfortable and even thrive in it. The example of the Chinese tolerance for uncertainty can be seen in the social relationship between Chinese people and other people in their surrounding. For example, when other people make an appointment with Chinese

people to meet in certain time and they finally do not come to the meeting, Chinese people will not simply judge the people they have waited for as liars, but they still have some positive thinking toward the people who make the appointment with them.

Besides the indirectness and tolerance for uncertainty, lying is also a habit in China. Chinese people lie all the time about this and that. Teenagers lie about their age to get jobs, workers lie when they are negotiating so they can get a better job, house wives lie to their husbands and children to make them easy in managing their family.

2.3.5 Endurance, Diligence, and Complaining

Many Chinese are very tough and have endured hard lives. Meanwhile, life for ordinary people is hard. It also makes them strong and determined to survive.

In *Riding the Iron Rooster*, Theroux wrote: "The cycle of frenzy and fatigue, seemed a Chinese way of living, working very hard, with tremendous concentration, and then stopping suddenly and going to sleep. Often in trains, two chattering and gesticulating people would crap out and begin to snore like bullfrogs."

Asian societies have traditionally put an emphasis on maintaining a stiff upper lip, remaining strong and getting over problems rather than talking about them. Those that seek help are often stigmatized as weak or crazy. Psychology, psychiatry and counseling are rather new fields in China, where Confucian

hierarchy has traditionally provided stability and people did not talk much about their feelings. Chinese traditionally do not like to articulate their emotions.

Chinese generally do not complain. In a 1997 survey by the Leo Burnett ad agency, 57 percent of Chinese agreed that people should not voice complaints (compared to 4 percent among Americans).

The expression of eating bitter describes putting up with hardships. If Chinese have a problem, they go to their parents and if their parents cannot help them, they bear their problems by themselves. Enduring and eating bitter are virtues highlighted by the Communists in the Long March and living in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. In modern China, people seem willing to tolerate unfairness and bitterness as long as their standard of living improves.

2.3.6 Risk, Success, and Competition

In the West risk takers are generally praised as people with ambition and drive while in China they are often viewed as overly emotional and careless. But that is not to say Chinese do not take risks. They also invest heavily in the stock market and like to gamble. They also have a strong entrepreneurial spirit and powerful desire to succeed in business. If they fail at one thing they will try something else.

Chinese can be very competitive. They are very serious about games and will do anything to win. Chinese never fight fairly. It is not because of their culture, and it is not because of their history. It comes from something inside their blood.

It traditionally has been considered to be in bad taste in China to come across as too ambitious. Many Chinese today however are obsessed with achieving success. Peter Hessler wrote on National Geographic that he found the following slogans inscribed next to a workers bed: Find success immediately, Face the future directly, and a person can become successful anywhere; I swear I will not return home until I am famous.

The Chinese used to say friendship first, competition second but this view is changing as individual and self development become more developed.

2.3.7 Speed and Change

The pace of life is very quick. Chinese get off planes very fast. Elevators doors close almost before you have time to step out.

Chinese people do not like anything old. They want everything new. If someone came from the moon, they would think is a newer country than America.

Peter Hessler wrote in National Geographic, Few Chinese spend much time thinking about the future. Decades of political turmoil taught citizens that nothing lasts forever, which inspires the fearlessness of the entrepreneurs but also makes them shortsighted.

2.3.8 Stress and Coldness in China

The high rate of economic growth has created great opportunities but has also generated a lot of stress and a strong sense of being left out and not getting a share of wealth no matter how hard you try.

One sociologist stated, "People are busy, they're making money and they don't care about your private life before people were idle and liked to tell you how to lead your life, but that's changed."

2.3.9 Pragmatism, Control, and Logic

Some have argued that the influence of Confucianism has caused Chinese to put more trust in traditions and authority over science and method, which Westerners emphasize. While Chinese can be very thoughtful, intuitive and logical, the argument goes, they tend to give more weight to relationships, obligations, loyalties and traditions when making a decision and approach problems in a holistic way rather than in sequential, linear or progressive way, which is the norm in the West.

Even so, Chinese also have a reputation for being quite practical and pragmatic. Peter Hessler stated, "People seem quite rational very pragmatic. This generation of Chinese you can pretty much predict how people will respond because they tend to act in their own best interest."

Pearl S. Buck once said; "The Chinese, while not a changeable people, are nevertheless people who are able to change when they see the time has come to change. They are basically practical people."

2.3.10 Approach to Negotiations

Journalist and China expert James McGregor wrote in the Washington Post, China is about unity, focus and leverage. Chinese officials and business executives are obsessed with a single question: What advantage do I have over you?

One Chinese scholar, who has written extensively about the United States stated, "If you treat China as a friend, he will treat you well and will never betray you. Treat him like an enemy and he'll fight back without hesitation."

2.3.11 Love of Business and Money

In the Mao era Chinese prided themselves on their frugality and desire to serve the people but today that sentiment seems like something from the distant past in fast-paced urban China. One Chinese man told the New York Times, The things we care about most in China now are money, money, and money. Another said, "It is all money-grubbing. Many Chinese have lost their sense or morality and ethics.

Chinese people never talked so much about money before. Now they are always talking about salaries and stocks.

In a poll in the 1990s, 68 percent of the Chinese said their attitude towards life was work hard and get rich." Only 4 percent said it was "never think of yourself; give everything in service of society." In a 1997 survey by the Leo Burnett ad: 64 percent of Chinese agreed that making money is most important part of career, compared to 27 percent of Americans.

A desire to make money is not something that is deeply rooted in Confucianism. Merchants and businessmen were at the bottom of the Confucian social order. Sons have traditionally been taught to give whatever money they made to their parents.

2.3.12 Directness, Openness, and Earthiness

In some situations Chinese can be very indirect, but in other situations they can be very direct, open and frank to the point of tactlessness. One aspect of Chinese "peasant directness" is that Chinese are not as shy about talking about their feces and urine as Americans. They often excuse themselves from social gatherings by saying the equivalent of "I have to take a shit" or "I have to take a piss" when they have to go the bathroom. When Theroux once asked a Chinese man on the train what he just did, he said, "I vomited in the toilet."

Chinese will sometimes openly laugh at the way foreigners look and dress and make comments about their noses and the way they speak Chinese.

The same is true with feeling. Unlike the Japanese and other Asians who often mask their feelings, the Chinese often not shy about expressing their feelings.

A guidebook for Chinese by Hong-Kong-born London-based Chinese advised his readers: Do not ask foreign women how old they are. Chinese are often ask people they have just met about their age, marital status, how much money they make, and whether or not they have a boyfriend or girlfriend. For Westerns, such questions are regarded as personal and prying. Chinese ask these questions for a couple of reasons. First of all they are curious. Second, they want to know a person's age and marital status so they know how to address the person.

2.3.13 Pushing, Staring, and Not Waiting in Line

Chinese are notorious for bumping into each other, blocking doorways, littering, spitting in restaurants, smoking anywhere they please, letting doors slam in people's faces, stopping their cars wherever they want, butting in line, shoving and pushing, walking in groups that take up the entire sidewalk, leaping into elevators, and generally not getting out of the way or watching where they are going. Chinese generally don't form lines they form "huddles" around ticket booths and bank clerks.

After years of long queues, Chinese people have learned to be ruthless about cutting in line. Zhou Xiaozheng, a sociology professor at Beijing University stated that the whole society is impatient.

Chinese act pushy unconsciously. They do not have the same concept of personal space as Westerners. Chinese are used to crowds and pushing you way through a busy sidewalk or subway station is considered normal. If two people collide, a brief apology might be offered, then people continue with their business as if nothing happened.

The Chinese love to stare at foreigners and it is not unusual for a "staring squad" of a hundred people to gather around a tourist in rural towns where local people do not see many foreign visitors. Staring back or getting angry is often counter-productive. It only attracts more attention.

2.3.14 Shouting, Noise, and Fighting

Citizen posters image The Chinese like to shout and make noise and can be quite loud and boisterous. What sounds like a bitter argument is often just a normal

conversation, especially in southern China. What sounds like a loud party is often just an ordinary get together. According to the Lonely Planet guide of China, "There seems to be a competition for who can speak the loudest, turn the radio or TV up to the highest volume and detonate the most firecrackers." Many scenic and otherwise serene spots in China are embellished with loud crackly music blaring from speakers nailed onto temples and trees. Chinese vitality is sometimes described with the word "renao," meaning hot and noisy. Even though Chinese can be loud and physical themselves they often frown upon Western-style loudness and boisterousness.

Chinese have been described as "non-confrontational." They often go out of their way to be polite and accommodating and avoid disputes and conflicts. Still, while fistfights are rare, pushing and shoving and screaming matches are quite common, and when conflicts do begin they can quickly escalate.

2.3.15 Socializing and Privacy

People like to hang out and socialize on the street, in courtyards or in open public spaces. Conversation is a major pastime and people enjoy joking around and teasing one another. Things are often done with the help of personal contacts. If you cannot find someone with a service you need you find someone who does know such a person.

Homes are open to family and friends. Brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts are frequent visitors. Friends often do not knock when they visit, they just walk in. It is not usual for guests to spend the night. There is not an emphasis

on privacy and calling ahead to let people know you are coming like there is in the United States.

In poor villages sometimes seven people sleep together in a single room and parents have sex while their children are sleeping.

2.3.16 Social Activities, Singing, and Photos

While Chinese can be shy and suspicious they can also be very outgoing, generous, curious and genuinely friendly. Many enjoy speaking English with strangers or going out drinking and having a good time. A Chinese people are very verbal, have vivid imaginations. However, they generally don't invite people to their house, which is regarded as private place just for family members.

Chinese like to do things in groups. They feel comfortable doing things with their friends and get a certain sense of security and reassurance from being with people like themselves.

Chinese generally are shyer about dancing than singing, whereas the reverse is true about many Westerners. Chinese children generally have few opportunities to dance when they grow up and feel awkward doing it, but they do a lot of singing in school and tend to regard it as a fun activity like recess or sports. Among Chinese adults karaoke is very popular. In parks, people often sit in groups of twenty or thirty and sing songs or put on plays or operas. Chinese singers with good voices of course are admired more than those with bad voices but even bad singers are applauded for their effort.

2.3.17 Happiness and Sense of Humour

Chinese are also fond of having photographs taken of themselves with their friends and are particularly fond of having their picture taken in front of anything considered wacky, different or strange. Chinese on hiking trips seem to do more photo-taking than hiking. This is because Chinese treasure their friends and the memory of good times, and the value of an activity is often measured more in the bonding that takes place than with the activity itself, plus they get enjoyment from posing and looking at the photos later on. Photos without people in them are considered boring.

2.4 Chinese Women

2.4.1 Chinese Women in Labor

In the article “1949-2007: Women Workers in China” written by Steven (2010), it is stated that after the “liberation” of China in 1949 which automatically brought the influence of socialism, the position of Chinese women was changed. Women were seen to be active in earning life for their families. Most of urban women did wage in state-owned factories or other business, while rural women worked in people’s commune’s labor service. “That changed their positions in their family, also due to the low wages in Mao’s era that the women’s wage is an important part of family income.” (Wang:159).

In her book "Gender and Work in Urban China, Women Workers of the Unlucky Generation" author Liu Jieyu follows the fate of some urban female workers of the generation of the Cultural Revolution (age-group born about 1945

to 1960). Women were hit harder than men by the redundancies following the restructuring of the state industries after the mid-1990s. 62.8 per cent of those laid-off were women, but they only constituted 39 per cent of the urban workers (Wang: 161). Liu wanted to find out which factors played a role here and how the women's life under socialism was dictated by the patriarchal structures and social norms.

Liu, whose mother belongs to those who were fired by danwei (work unit) in the 1990's and is today a lecturer of sociology of University of Glasgow stated that based on her interview with more than thirty percent of women in her mother generation who are nearly all are unskilled women, the result shown that Chinese women were disadvantaged and discriminated in each phase of their life.

The Chinese women who underwent the campaigns of the 1950s and The Great Leap Forward have seen the extent of the subsequent famine catastrophe. The wage labor of women and the breaking out of their households were seen as the sign of Chinese women liberation. However, the term of housewife still has a bad tone for them. Although the Chinese women went out to work with the low salary in the service, textile, and caring industries, but in fact they didn't get the true liberation because inside their family, the traditional patriarchal pattern still persisted. They were in charge of domestic affairs while their husbands were mainly breadwinners and decision-makers.

In the early 1950s the regime still encouraged women to have as many children as possible. That added to an enormous population growth. In the families the boys were treated better than girls, and they were more likely to be

chosen to receive (higher) education. The girls had to do the housework, including taking care of smaller siblings and the grandparents. That in turn effected their school education. "The women themselves attributed the neglect of their education to traditional 'feudal' attitudes. However, in a labor market biased against girls, investment in a son's education is a rational decision." (Liu: 29) So due to the gendered division of labor and the "traditional" privileging of boys, the women had less chances in life, in getting education and later on the labor market.

During the Cultural Revolution from the mid-1960s onwards there were slogans like "Now the times have changed, men and women are the same", at the same time all feminist demands or references to the special problems of women were denounced. They were seen as "bourgeois" (Honig: 255).

On the countryside men and women worked in different production teams. Men had to do the allegedly "harder" work. For instance, they had to carry the bags with rice seedlings, while the women had to plant them - often in a squatting position for hours. The hardship of a task was valued by "work points" (gongfen). One woman recalls: "In our place, men's labor was worth 10 points. The worst of them got 8.5 points. The best got 10 points. As for women's labor, the highest was 5.5 points." Another woman says: "We were only worth half labor." (Liu: 34)

2.4.2 The tradition of Foot Binding for Chinese Women

One of the discrimination towards women in China that happened for centuries is the tradition of foot binding which is seen as the symbol of beauty and sexiness in the view of men. The fact that Chinese women before the liberation in 1949 is

only treated as the second citizen who serve men is described in a thesis “ Women in China Change Over Time” written by Rit Nosotro (2000).

For centuries before the early 1900's, there was a prominent male domination in the country of China. Women were deprived of all rights and were present mainly to serve men. Women served as slaves, concubines, and prostitutes. Marriages were arranged, sometimes preparing a female from infancy to serve her future husband. This can be seen most effectively by the practice of foot binding. Beginning around the eleventh century, foot binding became a tradition. When a girl became three or four years of age her mother would tightly wrap her daughter's feet in bandages with her toes tucked under the soles. On top of this excruciating pain, the bandages would be tightened each day. If a woman's feet weren't bound she was considered unsuitable for marriage. In fact, it was preferred that the foot be around 3 inches in length.

Since Mao Tse Tung took power in 1949, he erased many of Chinese and old traditions which were viewed as not benefitting the country. Thus, the tradition of foot bounding had become nearly obsolete since the Communism coming.

2.4.3 Modern Chinese Women

Since the revolution in China until today, what so-called modern Chinese women enjoy equal legal status with men. Because now the Law of Protection on Rights and Interests of Women has come into being in China to protects the rights and interests of women to promote sexual equality.

The equality principle can be shown from some spheres of life, such as the equal chance of education, equal pay for equal work, equal training and selection of cadres for men and women, and the protection of family and the mother in marriage law.

2.5 Amy Tan's Biography

Amy Tan is a Chinese American writer who was born in February 19, 1952. The title of the most popular from her works is Joy Luck Club, the adaptation of her first novel. It translated into 35 languages. Other bestselling novels she wrote are The Kitchen God's Wife, The Hundred Secret Senses, The Bonestter's daughter and Saving Fish From Drawing. She also wrote a collection of non-fiction essays entitled, "The Opposite of Fate: A Book of Musings."

2.6 Framework of Analysis

In this final project I use two kinds of theories. The first is New Criticism and the second is Feminism.

New Criticism is a formalist theory that treats a text as if it was self-contained, not considering the reader response, author's intention, culture and historical contexts. "New Critics perform a close reading of the text, and believe the structure and meaning of the text should not be examined separately." (<http://www.wikipedia.org>, accessed on 13th August 2010). It is because the main characteristics of a text is oneness. The text form and the context are not separable. Form is the overall effect that the text create. Nevertheless, that the poem is somehow related to its author cannot be denied. T.S. Eliot states the New Critical position concerning this relationship between the author and his or her work.

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, feminism is the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunity as men.

Because in fact, "For century after century men's voice continued to articulate to determine the social role and culture and personal significance of women." (Charles E. Bressler: *Literary Criticism*: 181). Meanwhile, both women and men were born to the world as equal, no one has higher position than the other. Thus, feminism as one of the theory in literary criticism is the theory whose goal is to change the degrading view of women so that all women will realize that they are not "nonsignificant Other", but that each woman is a valuable person possessing the same privileges and rights as every man. (Charles E. Bressler: *Literary Criticism*: 180).

Simone de Beauvoir insists that women see themselves as autonomous beings. They must reject the social the societal construct that men are the subject or the absolute and that women are "the Other". Embedded in this false assumption is the supposition that males have power and defines cultural terms and roles. Accordingly, women must define themselves outside the present social construct and reject being labeled as the Other.

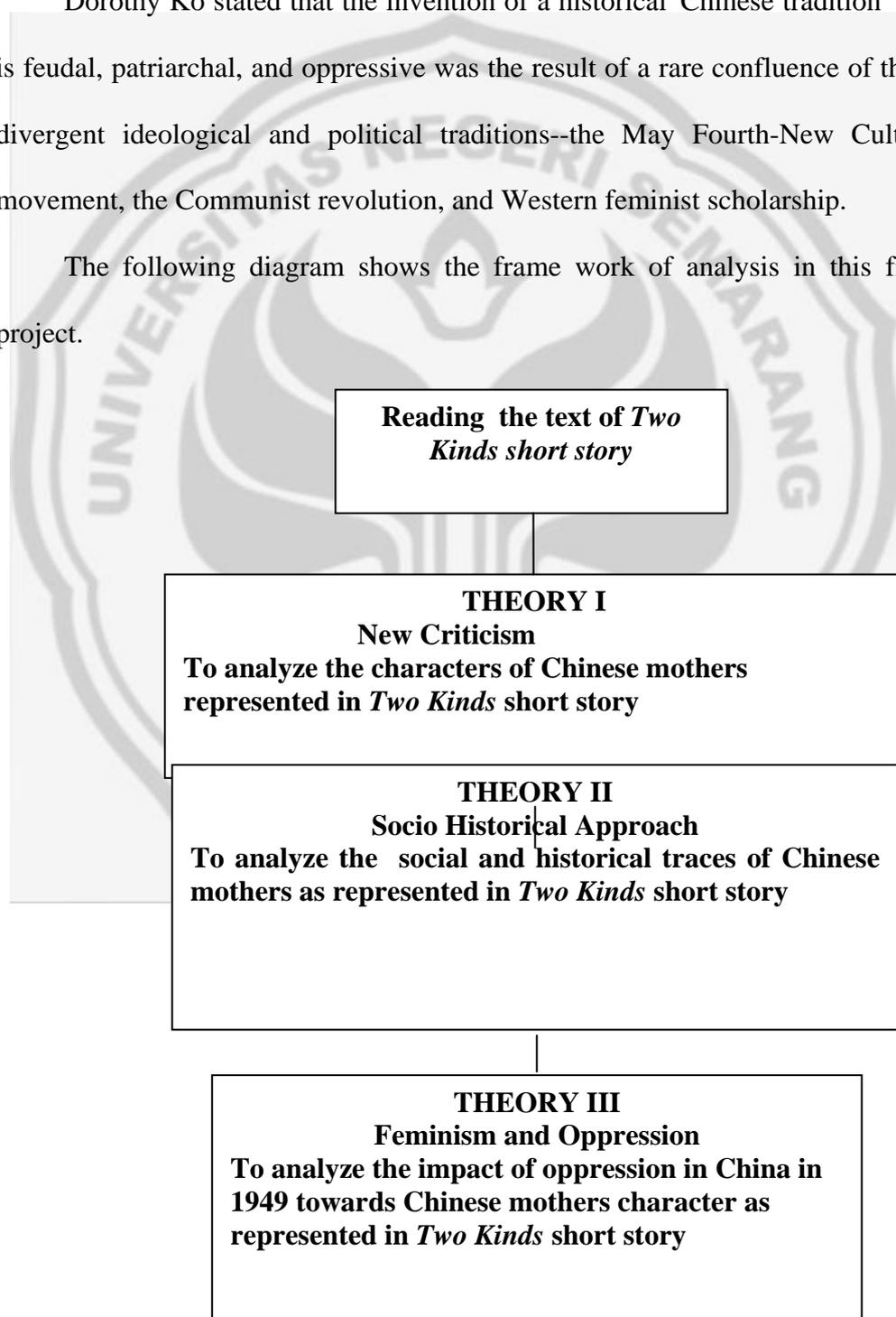
According to Wikipedia, oppression is the exercise of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel, or unjust manner. It can also be defined as an act or instance of oppressing, the state of being oppressed, and the feeling of being heavily burdened, mentally or physically, by troubles, adverse conditions, and anxiety.

There are many kinds of oppression, they are social oppression, systematized oppression, internalized oppression and indirect oppression. In this final project, the kind of oppression in China in 1949 related to women is the

internalized oppression. It means the manner in which an oppressed group comes to use against itself the methods of the oppressor. For example, sometimes members of marginalized groups hold an oppressive view toward their own group, or start to believe in negative stereotypes of themselves.

Dorothy Ko stated that the invention of a historical 'Chinese tradition' that is feudal, patriarchal, and oppressive was the result of a rare confluence of three divergent ideological and political traditions--the May Fourth-New Culture movement, the Communist revolution, and Western feminist scholarship.

The following diagram shows the frame work of analysis in this final project.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Object of the Study

The object of this study is a short story entitled *Two Kinds*, written by Amy Tan. In common, it is a story that concerns with the complex relationship between a Chinese American mother, Suyan and her daughter who was born in America, Jing Mei.

3.2 Type of Research

Seen from the data used, that is a non-numerical data collection, the type of this research is descriptive qualitative research. Wikipedia explains qualitative research as the following.

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry appropriated in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the [social sciences](#), but also in [market research](#) and further contexts. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of [human behavior](#) and the [reasons](#) that govern such behavior. The qualitative method investigates the *why* and *how* of [decision making](#), not just *what*, *where*, *when*. Hence, smaller but focused [samples](#) are more often needed, rather than large [samples](#). (<http://www.wikipedia.org>)

From the explanation above, in this final project the writer tried to gather an in-depth understanding of how the characters of a Chinese mothers represented by Suyan, especially seen from the way she treated her child named Jing Mei and then analyzed why it could be so by relating it to the Chinese

history and American immigrant one. The data were provided in the forms of phrases, sentences, and written dialogues from *Two Kinds* short story that has either implicit or explicit meanings.

3.3 Data and Data Source

Seen from the sources taken, in this final project, the writer used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were in term of words, phrases, sentences, and written dialogues from *Two Kinds*. Meanwhile, the secondary one were the theories underlying the analysis taken from secondary data source.

The data source that the writer used were primary and secondary. The primary data source was the teks of *Two Kinds* short story and the secondary one was taken from books, journals, and articles from internet related to the topic of this final project.

3.4 Procedure of Collecting the Data

In doing the procedure of collecting data, the writer took the following steps.

First, reading the short story several times to understand the whole story. This way the writer could find the problem in this research and found some quotations related to the research problem. In this research, the problem was what the influence of the oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers' characters. It was found after reading the third paragraph of the short story which explicitly gave the information about what happened in China in 1949

Second, searching some related references from books, journals and articles from internet. Among the topic that the writer searched were about the history of People's Republic of China (PRC), Chinese People, Chinese women, and Amy Tan's Biography.

Third, selecting and collecting the data taken from the short stories. The data are in term of phrases, sentences, and written dialogues.

The last, analyzing the impact of oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers' characters as represented in *Two Kinds* short story, written by Amy Tan by the data provided.

3.5 Technique of Analyzing

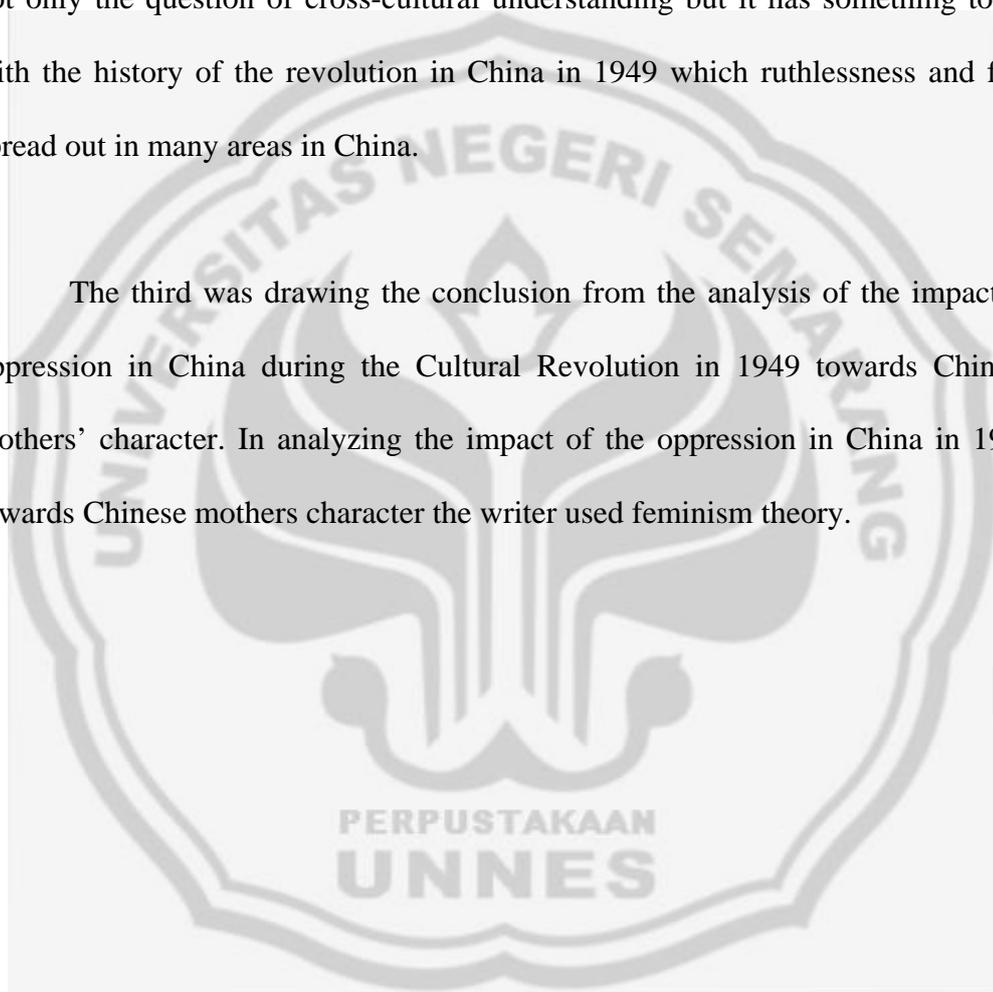
Since the purpose of this research is to find out impact of oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers characters as represented in *Two Kinds* short story, the writer used new criticism and socio-historical approach. In the analysis, the writer did the following steps.

First was analyzing the conflict between Suyuan, a Chinese mother and her American daughter, Jing Mei. In analyzing the conflict, the writer used new criticism approach. It helps the reader to understand the conflict in the relationship between a Chinese mother and her American daughter which becomes the main point in *Two Kinds* short story.

Second was analyzing the impact of oppression in China during the revolution in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers' character. In this research the writer took Suyuan as the representation of Chinese mothers who experienced the

hard life during the revolution in 1949. Meanwhile, Jing Mei was as the representation of American children and teenagers who experienced life supported by freedom in any aspects of life. The hypothesis that the writer made in advance was that the conflict between the Chinese mothers and their American children is not only the question of cross-cultural understanding but it has something to do with the history of the revolution in China in 1949 which ruthlessness and fear spread out in many areas in China.

The third was drawing the conclusion from the analysis of the impact of oppression in China during the Cultural Revolution in 1949 towards Chinese mothers' character. In analyzing the impact of the oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers character the writer used feminism theory.



CHAPTER IV

RESULT OF DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we discuss about the result of data analysis. It will be divided into two subchapters.

4.1 The Chinese Mothers' Characters Described In *Two Kinds*

Short Story

Every immigrant who comes for the first time to the new country will certainly undergo cultural shock. However, in order to be survived someone must adapt well with the new environment and struggle hard so that someone can finally solve his/her problem and find the way of getting better future in the new environment.

One of the stories of a Chinese woman immigrant coming to America in 1949 and struggled hard to reach her dream is described in the short story *Two Kinds* written by Amy Tan. Her name is Suyuan. As written in the first paragraph of the short story, she came to America after losing everything she had in China, as quoted below.

America was where all my mother's hopes lay. She had come to San Francisco in 1949 after losing everything in China: her mother and father, her home, her first husband, and two daughters, twin baby girls.
(Two Kinds, Quotation 1)

In the short story, there is no further explanation of the cause of Suyuan lost everything she had in China. Nevertheless, the year of 1949 written in the story is the key answer of it and the reason why she finally decided to move to another country, America.

In 1949 there was a great revolution in China namely Cultural Revolution which caused many chaos and tension everywhere since there were some programs from the government to make China under one ideology that is Communism. In such difficult situation, it was very possible that someone lost his/her house, things, and even families. Thus, Suyuan decided to move to a new country, that is America, with a new hope of getting peace and better future. As she moved to this country, she strongly believed in the concept of American Dream that with hard work, she felt that her child, Jing-Mei could be anything she wants to be in this great country.”

The followings will discuss about some characters of Chinese women as represented in *Two Kinds* short story.

4.1.1 Risk Taker

In Quotation 1, we see that one of the Chinese women characters who experience the condition in China before or after the Chinese Revolution is risk taker. In the case of Suyuan, despite the fact that she had no more wealth and families when she first time came to America, she was not hopeless at all. On the contrary, she looked for a solution to solve her problems of life. As a person with neither families nor friends she was so brave to immigrate to America with such uncertain condition that anybody else likely could not have undergone. Without having the character of taking risk, a woman with the miserable condition like Suyuan will think tens times to take action of leaving her country and living in a country which has totally different background from her mother land and which she has never had enough knowledge about the new country before.

Moreover, the year 1949 was the first year when Communism came to power which means the first year that women issue on gender equalisation was freely voiced after the long period of Confucianism structure ruled the Chinese society, including Chinese women. Therefore, as a matter of fact, at that time there had not been many women who bravely act out of what they used to before and it was only few of Chinese women were. The common Chinese women will prefer to play safe in their “comfortable zone” which is in fact uncomfortable too. Suyuan was one of the representation of those who were brave to do something new and challenging for their life, in this case was by moving out of China because in China, it was very difficult for many people to get a good life at that time.

The way Suyuan acted properly that was by making a decision to leave China as the solving of her life problems in China instead of going on her life in miserable condition after losing everything she had was the prove that she was a risk taker Chinese woman. She wanted to do anything she could do as long as it could bring the betterment for her life and later for her child that she had after getting married with an American man. Not all Chinese women in her period could be like her who acted differently and did hard challenges even though women underwent the same hardship and suffering in China. No matter how hard it was for Suyuan, but instead of holding out her miserable condition in China, she had better struggle for a new life in America.

In the further analysis of Suyuan’s life after moving to America, her character as a risk taker was still shown in her daily lives. Despite the fact that

America was a promising country for Suyuan, that goes without saying that she must encounter various challenges and competition with Americans as quoted from Gee in Devi (2006) below.

Chinese American women encounter a lot of personal, professional, cultural, and career challenges in their daily and work lives. They struggle for both their cultural family norms at home and their position in their work field which primarily defined by Western characteristics.

However, Suyuan never looked down on herself. She always tried whatever she could do in encountering these challenges and competitions.

4.1.2 Optimistic

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the word “optimistic” means expecting good things to happen or something to be successful. So, it is a positive character that will do someone good at any condition that he or she undergo whether in happiness or in calamity, in ease or in difficulty.

Optimism in *Two Kinds* short story is described as a character which is not only expecting good things to happen or something to be successful but it is expecting dan struggling with many efforts so that good things expected can come true.

My mother believed you could be anything you wanted to be in America. You could open a restaurant. You could work for the government and get good retirement. You could buy a house with almost no money down. You could become rich. **You could become instantly famous.** (Two Kinds, Quotation 2)

Suyuan was a Chinese immigrant and she was very optimistic that she could get her dream. Her big dream was making her child, Jing Mei Tan, to be a prodigy. She was so optimistic that her child could succeed soon as long as she

wanted to struggle hard. For that reason Suyuan never be bored to support her child realizing her dream.

As the common character of Chinese people, Suyuan as the representation of Chinese mothers described in *Two Kinds* short story had strong motivation to succeed. Chinese people in common like competition with others and they believe there is no success that can be achieved without hard working. Thus, they do not like to see someone being lazy while she or he knows very well that she or he has a dream to achieve. Moreover, if it happens to their own children, Chinese mothers will take action showing the optimistic character to make their children look alive and do more to make their dreams come true. In the short story, from Suyuan character we can see clearly the optimistic character of Chinese mothers, as quoted below.

"Just like you," she said. **"Not the best. Because you not trying."**
(*Two Kinds*, Quotation 3)

In Quotation 3, we can see that Suyuan gave her comment to Jing Mei about a little Chinese child playing piano in Ed Sullivan Show on TV. She wanted to tell Jing Mei that being perfect was not so important, but the most important was doing someone's best.

Even though someone may not be in wealth condition, but it is not a reason for someone not to make effort to achieve success. In *Two Kinds* short story, Suyuan tried hard to make Jing Mei become a prodigy. She brought many magazines that she got from the neighbours whose house she cleaned. She always showed many important information from the magazines about well-known children whom Jing Mei could imitate from, as seen in the following quotation.

She would present new tests, taking her examples from stories of amazing children that she read in Ripley's Believe It or Not or Good Housekeeping, Reader's digest, or any of a dozen other magazines she kept in a pile in our bathroom. My mother got these magazines from people whose houses she cleaned. And since she cleaned many houses each week, we had a great assortment. She would look through them all, searching for stories about remarkable children. (Two Kinds, Quotation 4)

From the quotation above, we see that Suyuan was not only expecting Jing Mei to be a prodigy and a successful person in the future, but she took the step to start her dream and did other steps following her first effort. The first step was asking Jing Mei to watch and pay attention to Ed Sullivan Show on TV and the next one was asking Jing Mei to read some magazines that she got from her neighbours whose house she cleaned everyday. For Suyuan, those magazines were very important for learning because there were many information from them, including the examples of remarkable children with great achievement and high intelligence. After reading those magazines, Suyuan made the third step that was giving oral test to Jing Mei to measure how far Jing Mei had learned.

Furthermore, in the next following step Suyuan worked cleaning the apartment of Mr. Chong, a retired piano teacher with the intention that the salary of cleaning Mr Chong's house could be for the cost of Jing Mei's private piano course with Mr Chong as Suyuan asked him to teach Jing Mei piano. She wished that one day Jing Mei could be a wellknown piano player.

She had talked to Mr. Chong, who lived on the first floor of our apartment building. Mr.Chong was a retired piano teacher, and **my mother had traded housecleaning services for weekly lessons and a piano for me to practice on every day, two hours a day, from four until six.** (Two Kinds, Quotation 5)

The quotations and explanations above have proven that Suyuan was a very optimistic Chinese woman who was not only expecting good things or

dreams to come true but also making hard efforts to realize her expectations or dreams, especially her biggest dream that was to make Jing Mei a prodigy.

4.1.3 Strict and Ambitious

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the word "strict" means that must be obeyed exactly. Meanwhile, the word "ambitious" means determined to be successful, rich, powerful, etc. In *Two Kinds* short story, Suyuan was very strict and ambitious for her child, Jing Mei which means she wanted Jing Mei to be successful so that every instruction she gave and every action she did to help Jing Mei achieving her success must be obeyed. When it was not obeyed, then Suyuan could be rude to Jing Mei with the intention of making her disciplined and obedient because it is for the sake of Jing Mei herself. Besides that, it was because as a Chinese mother she still believed that every child must be obedient to their parents. When a child was not obedient or rebellious, his or her parents had right to react accordingly even when they must be rude. The following quotation shows one of the impacts when Jing Mei showed her rebellion towards her mother's instruction that she should do well.

My mother slapped me. "Who ask you to be genius?" she shouted.

"Only ask you be your best. For you sake. You think I want you to be genius? Hnnh! What for! Who ask you!"(Two Kinds, Quotation 6)

Everytime Suyuan found an inspiration to make Jing Mei become a girl prodigy, she always managed what Jing Mei should do and practice. One of them was by having piano lesson with Mr. Chong. As Jing Mei was in fact not interested at all in that kind of thing, she was never serious during the lesson until once she asked to her mother, Suyuan why Suyuan wanted to make her another

one who was not her. She felt she couldn't be like what her mother wanted. She believed she was not and could not be a genius child. She wanted to be just the way she was.

Behind the strict and ambitious of Suyuan as a Chinese mother, there is the historical background causing it. As Suyuan used to endure the hard life and oppression in China until 1949 when Mao Tse Tung firstly established Communism and the name of China was changed into People's Republic of China, then she still brought her Chinese tradition into her immigration country, America. The most influencing tradition for Chinese women was Confucianism which taught the patriarchal system in Chinese families. Based on Confucianism, the success of a country is determined by the success of every single family inside that country which then influence people's behavior and acts in the society and governmental area. Therefore, every good rule and morality values must be taught and emphasized in the family first. Some examples of rules in Confucianism is that children must obey their parents, especially their father who has the position in the family because a father is the leader of family and is the most responsible of every decision made in the family. In *Two Kinds* short story, the importance of being obedient to their parents is shown in the following quotation.

Only two kinds of daughters," she shouted in Chinese. "Those who are obedient and those who follow their own mind! Only one kind of daughter can live in this house. Obedient daughter! (Two Kinds, Quotation 7)

The existence of this patriarchal system based on Confucianism has attracted the attention of worldwide society. Some view it as good structure containing many positive moral values, but some others take a dim view of it, as quoted below.

According to the World Health Organisation, China is the only country in the world where more women than men commit suicide. Every year a staggering 1.5 million women try to take their own lives and 150,000 succeed. This is especially the case in the countryside where women face grinding poverty, the highest school drop-out rates, and the burden of caring for elderly relatives. The woman belonging to the man; this has been the pattern of women's oppression for ages around the world.

Rapid industrialisation over many years, with China becoming the world's factory, has obviously transformed living conditions for many women. Despite miserable conditions, migrating for work and being able to support themselves, and sometimes even becoming the family's main breadwinner, has inevitably shaken up the older patriarchal structures. The most important change in becoming a wage labourer is leaving the isolation of the home and working under similar conditions to thousands of others. In this lies the possibility to organise and act collectively. (<http://www.anu.edu.au>, accessed on 9th January 2011)

In common, Chinese women used to be very obedient to their husband. Even they had no bravery to make a decision by themselves. They always must ask the opinion of their husband. Their obedience to their husband could also be seen from the existence of footbinding tradition which now has been erased because it is seen as a torture for women and a symbol of being the object of men's sex desire. However, the year when Suyuan immigrated to America was actually the starting point of the change of women's role in China. It was because since Communism was established in China, it strongly fought against not only religious activities but also any traditions including those which discriminated women because they were seen as hampering the development of Communist ideology. Thus, Chinese women were getting brave to play their new role as the independent persons who were given more freedom and chance in society, education and industrial fields. This way they were free to make a decision and determine their lives.

As America was where all Suyuan's hopes lay after enduring oppression and hard life in China for many years, when it seemed there were many bright chances in America, she developed to be strict and ambitious in order to get what she wanted, in this case was making her child become a prodigy. The desire of Suyuan to make her child a prodigy was also supported by the fact that her husband to whom she got married with in America was not as influencing as Suyuan in dealing with Jing Mei's journey to achieve success. The reason was most likely because Jing Mei's father who was an American was more flexible and democratic compared to Suyuan.

The reasons above are the causes why Suyuan had the strict and ambitious character as described in *Two Kinds* short story.

4.2 The Social Traces Describing The Impacts of Oppression In China In 1949 Towards The Chinese Mothers' Character As Represented in *Two Kinds* Short Story

The social traces describing the impacts of oppression in China in 1949 towards the Chinese mothers will be explained as follows.

4.2.1 The Way Chinese Mothers Educate Their Children: Following Confusianism and Using Force

Besides still reflecting from the rules in Confusianicm, the main way Suyuan educated Jing Mei was by using force. It can be seen from every effort she did to make Jing Mei a prodigy, a dream that seemed to be very nice for her, but in fact,

not for Jing Mei. The use of force as the mean of educating her child is shown in the following quotation.

We didn't immediately pick the right kind of prodigy. At first my mother thought I could be a Chinese Shirley Temple. **We'd watch Shirley's old movies on TV as though they were training films. My mother would poke my arm and say, "Ni kan. You watch."**(Two Kinds, Quotation 8)
From the quotation above, we see that Suyuan forced Jing Mei to watch

Shirley's old movies on TV as soon as she got a good image of prodigy, that was Shirley Temple, a Chinese kid artist whom according to her was a right kind of prodigy to be followed by Jing Mei. The last sentence of the quotation above: *My mother would poke my arm and say, "Ni kan. You watch."* clearly describes that it was not Jing Mei who whole-heartedly wanted to practice her acting ability by watching Shirley's movies, but solely it was due to the instruction from her mother. That is the first kind of force done by Suyuan to her child, Jing Mei. The second force can be seen from the following quotation.

Soon after my mother got this idea about Shirley Temple, **she took me to the beauty training school in the Mission District and put me in the hands of a student who could barely hold the scissors without shaking.** Instead of getting big fat curls, I emerged with an uneven mass of crinkly black fuzz. **My mother dragged me off to the bathroom and tried to wet down my hair.** "You look like a Negro Chinese," she lamented, as if I had done this on purpose. (Two Kinds, Quotation 9)

From the quotation above we know that the way Suyuan took Jing Mei to the beauty training school was the further use of force she did to make Jing Mei like Shirley Temple. She wanted to change Jing Mei's hair style into the prettier hair style that was big fat curls so that Jing Mei could look like Shirley Temple. Nevertheless, instead of getting big fat curls, Jing Mei emerged with uneven mass of crinkly black fuzz hair style and thus, it made Suyuan angry. Then, Suyuan

dragged Jing Mei off to the bathroom, trying to wet down Jing Mei's hair which according to Suyuan made Jing Mei look like a Negro Chinese and Suyuan certainly did not like it.

The explanation above is the second force done by Suyuan. The third one can be seen from the quotation below.

Every night after dinner my mother and I would sit at the Formica topped kitchen table. She would present new tests, taking her examples from stories of amazing children that she read in Ripley's Believe It or Not or Good Housekeeping, Reader's digest, or any of a dozen other magazines she kept in a pile in our bathroom. (Two Kinds, Quotation 10)

From the quotation above, we can see that the schedule for Jing Mei to learn from so many magazines that Suyuan got from her neighbors that was "*every night after dinner*" and the kinds of information or knowledge that must be learned were all the idea of Suyuan, solely because Suyuan's own thought and interest without considering whether it was too burdening for Jing Mei or not, whether Jing Mei's capability was enough to learn every information and knowledge Suyuan asked to learn or not, and the most important, whether all she did was in line with Jing Mei's own interest or not. As a matter of fact, all of that which was good and interesting for Suyuan was not interesting at all for Jing Mei. Because Jing Mei had no interest at all towards all activities her mother asked her to do, including learning and answering oral test every night with a dozen magazines provided as the source of information to learn besides the Bible, the result was zero. The more test Suyuan gave to Jing Mei, the harder Jing Mei felt it be. Furthermore, as Suyuan knew the disappointing result of the learning, Suyuan would show her disappointed face in front of Jing Mei and that was the main cause of Jing Mei's under pressure feeling, especially due to her mother's high

expectation which she could never reach, however. The following quotation shows this condition.

The tests got harder - multiplying numbers in my head, finding the queen of hearts in a deck of cards, trying to stand on my head without using my hands, predicting the daily temperatures in Los angeles, New York, and London. One night I had to look at a page from the Bible for three minutes and then report everything I could remember. "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance and.." **that's all I remember, Ma," I said. And after seeing, wo once again, my mother's disappointed face, something inside me began to die. I hated the tests, the raised hopes and failed expectations.** (Two Kinds, Quotation 11)

Even though every parents have the right to guide and direct their children for the sake of their children's bright future, children also have right to get their own freedom to choose something that they like. They may do the instruction from their parents but they are not like robot who must obey every single instruction from their parents. Children have feeling and nature capability to choose so that when they feel bored or not interested in something, they need other choises they possibly can choose. Therefore, as good parents, in the process of educating their children, being democratic and flexible besides disciplined is very important.

However, as a parent who had been living for years in America, Suyuan could not grasp the importance of being democratic and flexible to her child. On the contrary, she still engaged with the tradition of Confusionism which basically teaches children to always be obedient to their parents. Supported by the fact of Chinese Revolution in 1949 when the role of women was changed significantly in the society, governmental, and industrial fields, with high confidence Suyuan moved to America, struggling for a new life, and when she got married and had a child, she educated her child using the way she believed to be the best one, no

matter it was such a kind of oppression for her child who was born in America, not in China, as quoted below.

I didn't have to do what mother said anymore. I wasn't her slave. This wasn't China. (Two Kinds, Quotation 12)

The quotation above clearly shows that as a child who was born in America, Jing Mei took a dim view of Suyuan's thought and way of life which as if they were living in China.

4.2.2 The Change of The Chinese Women Character: Becoming Rude

As has been explained in sub chapter 4.1, the character of Chinese women, in this case Chinese mothers represented in *Two Kinds* short story is risk taker, optimistic, strict and ambitious. Furthermore, inside this character, the oppression in China in 1949 had caused them to develop their character to be rude, the way the leader of China at that time, Mao Tse Tung was rude in spreading out Communism as well as to make the Chinese society's lives was abided by the rules in Communism.

In *Two Kinds* short story, the rudeness of Suyuan is not shown in her words, but her actions. The following quotation shows Suyuan rudeness in term of actions she did to Jing Mei.

"Why don't you like me the way I am?" I cried. "I'm not a genius! I can't play the piano. And even if I could, I wouldn't go on TV if you paid me a million dollars!" My mother slapped me. "Who ask you to be genius?" she shouted."(Two Kinds, Quotation 13)

From the quotation above, we see that Suyuan slapped Jing Mei even though it was just because small reason that Jing Mei expressed her feeling

honestly that she just would be like the way she was. She did not have any interest to be an artist on TV even though she could play a piano one day.

The quotation below also shows Suyuan rudeness to Jing Mei.

She snapped off the TV, yanked me by the arm and pulled me off the floor. She was frighteningly strong, half pulling, half carrying me towards the piano as I kicked the throw rugs under my feet. She lifted me up onto the hard bench. I was sobbing by now, looking at her bitterly. Her chest was heaving even more and her mouth was open, smiling crazily as if she were pleased that I was crying. (Two Kinds, Quotation 14)

The quotation above explained Suyuan's rude treatment to Jing Mei every time Jing Mei did not obey her instruction, in this case was attending piano lesson as had been her daily schedule arranged by Suyuan. Instead of attending the piano lesson as had been reminded by Suyuan times, Jing Mei only watched TV. Thus, Suyuan was so angry and she yanked Jing Mei by the arm and strongly pulled her off the floor. Suyuan's rude treatment caused Jing Mei frightened and being oppressed.

The explanation above are the social traces describing two impacts of oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers' character who used to endure difficulties, hardship and oppression during the Chinese Revolution. Thus, after living in a new country, America which shows promise and its people are given freedom to struggle for their dreams, the Chinese mothers as represented in *Two Kinds* short story compensate their failure during their previous living in China by making efforts to make their children successful persons besides they themselves also struggle and compete with other Americans. Not only that, Chinese mothers are also good decision makers for the bright future of their children. Brushing up on their experiences in China before and during Chinese

Revolution make them have the commitment of not letting their children to undergo the same miserable condition and long suffering in life. Meanwhile, the use of force and rudeness in educating their children to achieve success is the impact of the ruthlessness of the leader in China during Cultural Revolution as the mean to achieve government purpose.

All the discussions and findings above are the answers of two statements of problem in this final project.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1. Conclusion

The conclusion of this final project is the following.

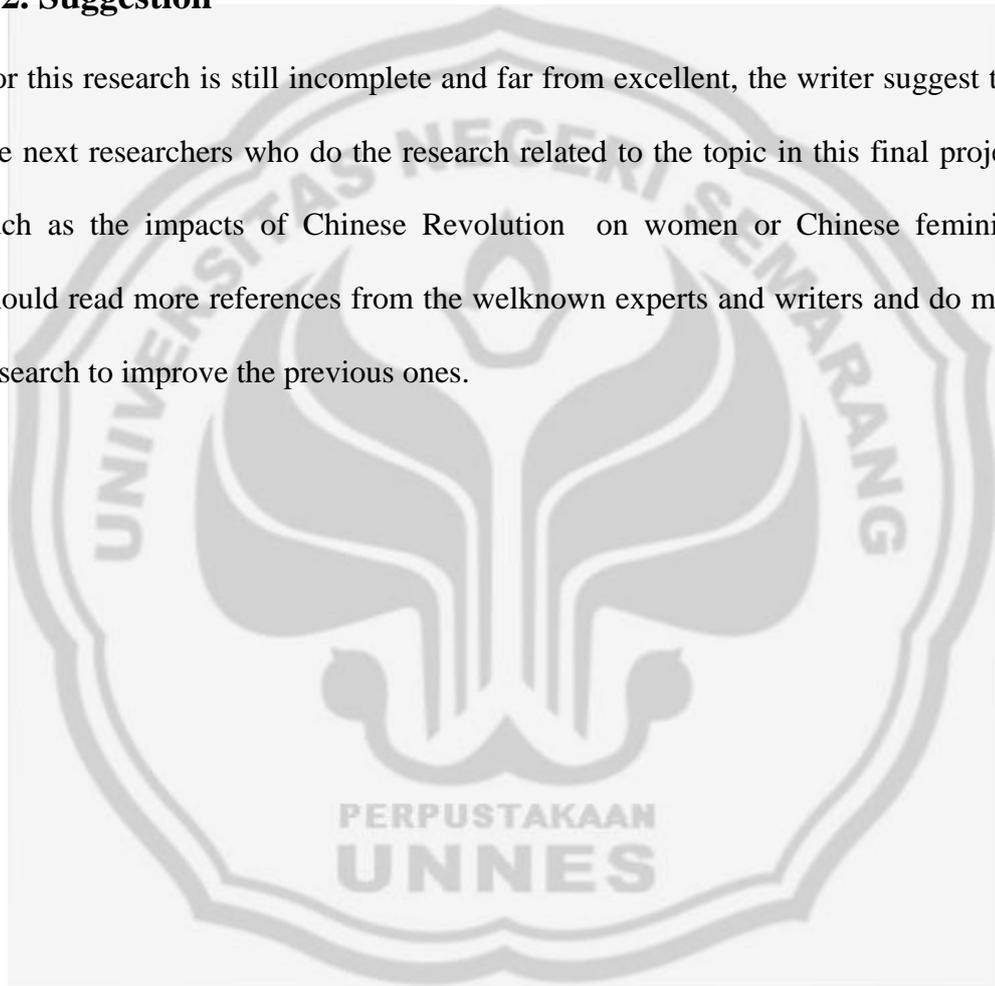
The Chinese mothers' characters described in *Two Kinds* are risk takers, optimistic, strict and ambitious. Optimism in the short story is described as a character which is not only expecting good things to happen or something to be successful but it is expecting and struggling with many efforts so that good things expected can come true. In the case of Suyuan, in order to make Jing Mei a prodigy, she had done many efforts like asking Jing Mei to watch Ed Sullivan Show on TV regularly and pay great attention of it, to read and learn from from some magazines she got from her neighbors whose house she cleaned every day, to clean the house of Mr Chong, an old retire piano teacher with the intention of exchanging the salary of cleaning his house into teaching Jing Mei piano course privately everyday. Meanwhile the strict and ambitious character of Chinese mothers as represented in *Two Kinds* short story were caused by the historical background of China in 1949 which was the transition era between the end of Confucianism and the raise of gender issue due to Chinese Revolution.

There are two social traces describing the impacts of Oppression in China in 1949 towards Chinese mothers as represented in *Two Kinds* short story. The first impact is reflected in the way Chinese mothers educate their children. They still follow Confucianism and they use force as the means to achieve their

purpose, the same way the leader of China used force and ruthlessness as the in educating the society of China during the Chinese Revolution. The second impact is changing the Chinese mothers's becoming rude.

5.2. Suggestion

For this research is still incomplete and far from excellent, the writer suggest that the next researchers who do the research related to the topic in this final project, such as the impacts of Chinese Revolution on women or Chinese feminism should read more references from the welknown experts and writers and do more research to improve the previous ones.



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