

**THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE FEMALE BODY
IN BI FEIYU'S NOVEL *THREE SISTERS***

SKRIPSI

BY:

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**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN INDONESIA
JAKARTA**

2026

**THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE FEMALE BODY
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SKRIPSI

Presented to Fakultas Sastra dan Bahasa Universitas Kristen Indonesia in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra*

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JAKARTA
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FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
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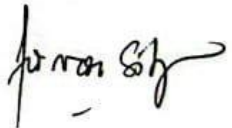
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I sincerely hope that this thesis may be of benefit and value not only to myself but also to all readers. I am fully aware that this thesis is still far from perfect; therefore, I welcome any constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement.

Jakarta, June 25th, 2026

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ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini mengkaji komodifikasi tubuh perempuan dalam novel *Three Sisters* (2010) karya Bi Feiyu, dengan berfokus pada tiga karakter utama: Yumi, Yuxiu, dan Yuyang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dan menerapkan teori komodifikasi Karl Marx, khususnya konsep nilai guna dan nilai tukar, untuk menganalisis bagaimana tubuh masing-masing tokoh bertransformasi dari entitas yang bermakna secara biologis dan personal menjadi objek yang dinilai berdasarkan kegunaan sosial dan ekonominya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tubuh Yumi dikomodifikasi melalui pernikahan dan tugas domestik sebagai sarana memulihkan kedudukan sosial keluarganya; tubuh Yuxiu dikomodifikasi melalui kecantikan fisiknya yang berfungsi sebagai modal sosial utama; dan tubuh Yuyang dikomodifikasi melalui manipulasi emosional, di mana kebutuhannya akan pengakuan dieksploitasi secara sistematis oleh figur yang memiliki otoritas institusional. Meskipun setiap tokoh menempuh jalur komodifikasi yang berbeda, ketiganya berakar pada struktur patriarki yang sama, yang dibentuk oleh nilai-nilai Konfusianisme, khususnya doktrin Tiga Ketaatan dan Empat Kebajikan, yang tetap bertahan di balik retorika resmi kesetaraan gender pada masa rezim Mao. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa dalam masyarakat patriarkal di pedesaan Tiongkok tahun 1970-an, komodifikasi tubuh perempuan berfungsi sebagai mekanisme bertahan hidup, di mana agensi personal dan penindasan struktural saling terkait secara mendalam dan tidak dapat dipisahkan. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi studi sastra terhadap karya-karya Bi Feiyu serta studi gender mengenai representasi tubuh perempuan dalam sastra Tiongkok modern.*

Kata Kunci: komodifikasi, tubuh perempuan, nilai guna, nilai tukar, patriarki, Karl Marx, *Three Sisters*, Bi Feiyu, sastra Tiongkok, gender.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the commodification of the female body in Bi Feiyu's novel *Three Sisters* (2010), focusing on three central characters: Yumi, Yuxiu, and Yuyang. The study employs a qualitative descriptive method and applies Karl Marx's theory of commodification, particularly the concepts of use value and exchange value, to analyze how each sister's body transforms from something biologically and personally meaningful into an object valued primarily for its social and economic utility. The findings reveal that Yumi's body is commodified through marriage and domestic duty, which serve as a means of restoring her family's lost social standing; Yuxiu's body is commodified through her physical beauty, which functions as her primary form of social capital; and Yuyang's body is commodified through emotional manipulation, whereby her deep need for recognition is systematically exploited by a figure of institutional authority. Although each sister follows a distinct path toward commodification, all three cases are rooted in the same patriarchal structure shaped by Confucian values, particularly the doctrine of the Three Obediences and Four Virtues, which persisted beneath the official rhetoric of gender equality promoted under the Maoist regime. The study concludes that in the patriarchal society of 1970s rural China, the commodification of women's bodies functioned as a mechanism of survival, one in which personal agency and structural oppression were deeply and inseparably intertwined. This research is expected to contribute to literary studies on Bi Feiyu's works as well as to gender studies on the representation of women's bodies in modern Chinese literature.

Keywords: commodification, female body, use value, exchange value, patriarchy, Karl Marx, *Three Sisters*, Bi Feiyu, Chinese literature, gender