

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

After analyzing Susan Sontag's In America, I would like to draw some conclusions. The protagonist of the novel, Maryna Zalezowska, is an independent woman who decides everything herself, she bravely takes actions without depending on others. She establishes it by leaving Poland while she is at the peak of her career because she wants to renew her life and find utopian commune. Her husband, Bogdan, comes with her and she becomes the leader of her group when they are in America. She decides everything for the group and they obey her. As a woman, she shows her capability in becoming a leader that mostly intended for men.

Unfortunately, the condition in America is not like what they have expected, life is hard, one by one her friends, leave her and return to Poland, but Maryna as a tough woman does not give up. She works hard to earn some money and can accept all the consequences of her decision in order to sustain her life in America. With her determination, she knows what to do during the hard time. As she realizes that her great ability is in theatre, she prepares herself to join Booth's theatre and determines to become a great actress. It is hard to become a great actress because the society underestimates her but she still struggles to get her dream. Without giving up, she thinks about her roles in the drama that she is preparing and hires a tutor to improve her English language. Then, she succeeds in her first performance and

becomes popular until the end of the story. From her achievement, she can send money for her helpless husband at Anaheim and this makes her husband's life depend on her.

Through the characteristics of Maryna, Susan Sontag as a feminist wants to prove that woman is an incredible being. The protagonist becomes independent in deciding everything by herself, she is tough in facing all the problems and learning to solve it, she also insists on keeping her will. What makes her survive is her vision; a dream that she wants to get a better future and a new life in America. Despite the unpleasant condition and the society in San Francisco, she still keeps her commitment to stay. Until the end of the story, her characteristics do not change; moreover, she gains success, which she never gets in Poland. Her characteristics are related to Beauvoir's theory that women must see themselves as a subject, thus they must stand by themselves and do not depend on men in making a decision.

Through the analysis of In America, I learn that there is no permanent subject and that the position of men and women is socially constructed. In patriarchal society, which is in favour of men, men are seen as the subject. Accordingly, women are considered the object to make the binary opposition. Women are put in such position that they cannot become a free being, that their lives are dependent on and controlled by men. Moreover, women are often considered the weaker sex and the less brave. However, the characteristics of Sontag's protagonist, Maryna, oppose the social construction. Susan Sontag is capable in creating a woman that show us, the readers, that women are not weak beings who are incapable of making any decisions and are dependent on men. Maryna can handle all the problems that come into her life without being controlled by men. Hence, it makes me realize that it is not proper

to see women as object and men as subject. Women and men are human beings that have equal freedom.

I find that this novel is fascinating because it tells about the struggle and independence of a woman in life. Accordingly, it is certain that Susan Sontag wants to reveal her thoughts about feminism by creating this character.

In creating the protagonist in her novel, Susan Sontag is inspired by Helena Modrzejewska, a Poland great actress who immigrated to California to find utopian commune. When the utopian experiment failed, she returned to the stage. During her career, she had a reputation as the leading female interpreter, she was often invited to speak in a women's conference and gave support for charity activities. No wonder, Sontag can succeed in portraying the protagonist of Maryna, who represents woman that has great characteristics in patriarchal society. I conclude that Susan Sontag has succeeded in delivering her points of view about feminism and the women's position in society through this novel.