

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, the roles of Thai women, which are examined through the leading female characters, Rachanee from *Ghosts* and Boonrawd from *That Woman's Name is Boonrawd*, are completely different from the traditional roles. In the book *Women in Thai Literature* by the National Identity Board Office of the Prime Minister (1992), the critic describes the traditional roles of Thai women as being inferior, obedient, dependent, and passive as followers. Women are like the object or men's property. They have to obey, respect, and be under the power of their parents, relatives, and, particularly, husbands. They have no opportunity to argue, express opinion, and even choose a marriage partner. For the role of wife, they have to obey, respect, and please their husbands.

As reflected in the two novels, both leading female characters represent women in the modern society. However, these two novels are written in the different time. The time of *Ghost* is the 1950s whereas *That Woman's Name is Boonrawd* is the 1960s. The analysis shows the gradual development of the role changing of Thai women from the early period when high-class women began to work outside mainly due to the influence of education to the later period when working class women significantly became the economic and industrial labors. This presents the transition of Thai women from traditional women to modern women. The results of the study show that modern women are different from traditional women in that they are more confident, independent, and insistent. They have ability in working and can depend on themselves. However, it is noticeable that women in the later period are still being unaccepted and discriminated. Particularly, they confront a barrier caused by the restriction of gender rights and equality. Therefore, the researcher has intention to deepen awareness of the women's rights because it is the foremost problem that is really worth solving.

From the study through the two leading characters of these two novels, the overall changing roles are analyzed in terms of family, education, economic, and social roles. The result shows that for the family role, it is found that women are more independent than those in the past. They are grateful to their parents but they do not

have to be dominated or ruled by them. They have freedom to make decision by themselves and have a chance to live their own life. Moreover, they can play the role of family leaders who take care of and support all the family members. For the educational role, women have ability in learning new things. Besides, they have more opportunity to extend their education to a higher level, both formal and informal education, and they can make practical use of the knowledge and apply it to their work. For the economic role, they can do business and involve in occupation. They have ability to work both inside and outside the house and become the family's earners who can support themselves and their families. For the social role, they have freedom to associate with other people including men. They also make decision in choosing their own marriage partners.

In terms of social and gender equality, they believe that people should not be classified into ranks, and they should be equal to others in the society because they have the same rights as being human. Moreover, the gender equality is emphasized in which men and women should be equally treated and accepted in the society. Women in the modern society can work outside the house. Moreover, men and women should help each other work both inside and outside the house.

These changing roles result from many influential factors namely family, social, educational, economic, and development factors. For the family factor, the members of family motivate women to change their roles. The example, failure, and lessons from life of the family members make women want to change their role. They choose to lead their lives in a different way much different from the traditional women. Moreover, many women play the role of the family leader due to the lack of father or husband. They become the head of the family. For the social factor, the inequality caused by the different ranks of people in the society influences women to change their roles. Women in the higher status tend to ignore the social ranks but focusing on the virtue of people instead while women in the inferior status try to enhance their social level in order to be equally accepted and respected like others in the society. In terms of the educational factor, education takes an important part in stimulating women to work outside. Both formal and informal education makes women have more opportunity in occupation. The knowledge they obtain can be applied to work. Due to the economic factor, women have to work outside the house.

In a poor family, only one person cannot support the whole family. Thus, the family members, including women, need to assist in working to support the family. The country's development also influences them to change their roles differently from the tradition since it introduces the western modernity, new values, and lifestyle. These also gradually shape our society into the new form. They also encourage women to have social activities. Thus, women have an opportunity to participate in development and business sectors.

The researcher disagrees with the traditional concept that values women as men's property. Women should have the right to lead their own life like men. The researcher believes that some traditional values should be rejected if they create discrimination and inequality in the society. Besides, women should focus on their existence as being part of the society. They should have an opportunity to participate in the country development.

As the roles of women have changed for decades, the novels, functioning as social record, are important in reflecting the change in the particular time mentioned in the novels. They also reflect the development of the changing roles of Thai women from the early period to the present. Furthermore, the novels can function as the tool to convey the message from the writers to the readers. These two novels represent the voice of women to declare their existence and significance in the society that have been silent for a long time. Simultaneously, they also can be used as effective sources to present social situations and to raise our awareness of problems. The writers insert many problems, which are the consequence of the change and hope for movement and action that will lead to the correct solution.

Finally, these selected two novels do not only present the changing roles of Thai women, but also the underlying factors influencing these changes. Also, it is hoped that the analysis of both novels will be greatly valuable and significant in reflecting the fundamental information and illustrations of women's changing roles that help the readers understand better about the changing roles of Thai women at present and the way these influential factors have gradually shaped our society.