

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

Having analysed the theme of Pearl S. Buck's novel, Imperial Woman, in the previous chapter, I come to the conclusion that the novelist succeeds in revealing the theme through the three major characters.

In the portrayal of the protagonist Yehonala, the novelist shows that Yehonala changes from a poor girl who does not have any position in the Empire into a rich woman who holds an important position. She has both wealth and position; however, it does not make Yehonala feel happy because actually there is something more important than the two things, namely love and freedom. As an empress, Yehonala does not have these two things in her life. The novelist deliberately shows that wealth and a high position do not make Yehonala have freedom as she wishes.

To reveal the theme that having a lot of money and a high position does not mean having more freedom and happiness, the novelist portrays Sakota in more or less the same way. Sakota's rise from an ordinary girl to the position of the First Imperial Concubine / Consort does not make her happy

because she does not have much freedom. In fact, she is under the control of Yehonala's power and her life is not as pleasant as it looks.

The third character, Jung Lu, experiences a similar fate. His rise of status from a guardsman to a Grand Councilor does not secure happiness and freedom. Even after he becomes a prince, he still feels that his life is miserable and he also suffers because he should conceal his profound feeling for Yehonala. Here, the novelist shows that wealth and a high position do not make him happy since he cannot even express his love to his beloved woman.

The novelist also shows that the three major characters experience changes. In general, they have changed for the worse. The kind-hearted Yehonala becomes merciless after having an important position. Sakota, who used to be pure and soft, becomes a jealous and even very stubborn woman. Likewise, Jung Lu, who used to be honest and brave, becomes a dishonest coward because he has affairs with some of the concubines secretly and tries to avoid Yehonala.

Through this novel, we learn that the higher position and wealth the characters have and the more wealth they gain, the less freedom they have. Actually, the higher they are, the more burdens they have because they have more obligations and responsibilities.

I find that the novelist presents realistic characters, meaning that people often have similar experiences with the three major characters. They frequently think that wealth and a high position are the most important things

in life. However, they often find that without love and freedom, wealth and a high position alone cannot really make them happy; instead, sometimes they make them feel empty.

In spite of the fact that wealth is not everything, I must admit that to a certain extent, one needs money or wealth to survive but I want to emphasize that money is not the only thing in the world that can make people happy. I agree with the novelist that love and freedom are more important than wealth and a high position.