

APPENDICES

Synopsis of the Good Earth

The story begins with Wang Lung's proposal to a slave, O-Lan, from the great house of Hwangs. Through frugality and hard work, Wang Lung and O-Lan fare relatively better than other farmers in the village. However, as the weather turns disastrous for farming, the family has to flee to the city to find work by selling their meager possessions (but not including the land) and take the train to the city for the first time.

In the city, O-Lan and the children beg for money and Wang Lung pulls a rickshaw. Soon they find themselves aliens among their more metropolitan countrymen and foreigners. They are no longer starving but they still live like paupers.

Meanwhile, the hostile political climate worsens and Wang Lung longs to return to the village. Eventually, a riot occurs and a mass of people are breaking into the rich people's houses. Wang Lung encounters a rich man who has not managed to flee. The rich man is frantic. He believes Wang Lung would kill him so he offers gold in exchange for his life. Wang Lung suddenly realizes what the gold means so that he takes it with him.

As he gains the gold, their family returns to their land. Upon returning to the house, the family fares better. With the gold from the city, Wang Lung buys an ox and farming tools, and hires for help. He is eventually able to send his sons to school, build a new house and live comfortably. The wealth of the family is the result of the harvest of Wang Lung's land – the good earth in the title of the novel.

Using jewels that O-Lan loots from the house in the city, they buy the Hwangs' remaining land. However, one year later, flood destroys all the farming lands. Wang Lung, who has nothing to do all day, eventually becomes a spendthrift and decides to take a concubine, Lotus.

At the end of the novel, Wang Lung overhears his sons plotting to sell some of the land. Wang Lung makes a desperate, feeble argument to persuade them otherwise, but the sons insist on selling the lands. They promise him comfort but they do not actually mean what they say.

Biography of Pearl S. Buck

Pearl Comfort Sydenstricker Buck was born on June 26, 1892 in Hillsboro, West Virginia to Caroline (Stulting; 1857-1921) and Absalom Sydenstricker, a Southern Presbyterian missionary. The family was sent to Zhenjiang, China in 1892, when Pearl was three months old. She was raised in China and learned the Chinese language, culture, and customs from a Chinese teacher. She was taught English language as a second language by her mother and a tutor. She was encouraged to write things at an early age by her mother and teacher.

The Boxer Rebellion greatly affects Pearl S. Buck and her family. In 1910, she left China once again for America to attend Randolph-Malcolm Woman's College, where she would earn her degree (Phi Beta Kappa) in 1914. She returned to China and married an agricultural economist, John Loring Buck, on May 13, 1917.

In 1920, they had a daughter, Carol, who was afflicted with phenylketonuria. The small family then moved to Nanjing, where Pearl taught English literature at the University of Nanking. In 1925, the Bucks adopted Janice (later surname Walsh). In 1926, she left China and returned to the United States for a short time in order to earn her master degree from Cornell University. She was a prolific American writer who won a Nobel Prize in Literature and a Pulitzer Prize.

The Good Earth is one of the trilogies House of Earth written by Pearl S. Buck. It was first published in 1931 and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the Novel in 1932. The other books from the trilogy are Sons (1932) and A House Divided (1935). The novel described a non-Caucasian culture in detail and helped prepare Americans of the 1930s to consider Chinese as allies in the coming war with Japan.

Source:

- "Pearl S. Buck", Wikipedia
- "Pearl S. Buck", Gradesaver

EXAMINER'S NOTE FOR REVISION

Student must go to supervisor I / II (circle as appropriate)

Points to elaborate / reconsider:

EVALUATION SHEET

1st / 2nd * evaluation

This draft is declared

Fit / unfit * for the thesis defence examination
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