

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In my thesis, I intend to analyze the female major character, O-Lan from Pearl S. Buck's, The Good Earth. O-Lan is a woman from low class society who is married to Wang Lung. The novel tells about their life, when they are still poor until they become wealthy. As a wife, O-Lan is tied by the tradition in which she cannot get her own desire as she has to serve the family without any reward for her entire life. She desires love and attention from her husband and children but they didn't give it to her. However, O-Lan holds an important role in the family as she takes over some of her husband's duty for the family.

The Good Earth wins the Pulitzer Prize as it shows the readers about Chinese society where women, both children and adults, are considered to be the second sex and they can be treated badly without consequences for those who do it. ("The Good Earth")

The Good Earth is one of Buck's novels which show us the Chinese image from the Western point of view. Buck experienced life in China, where she spent her childhood since her missionary parents were assigned there. Buck, who lives with her

Chinese *amah*, learns things from her such as Chinese cultures and customs, Chinese languages and also the religion.

As time went by, Buck saw many girls suffer since they were born as their existence was undesirable to their parents. Some of the girls were sold to the others to be slaves for their entire life and some of them were left behind in the empty street to die slowly of hunger. (“Pearl S. Buck”)

Those experiences of her have influenced her to make novels about it to show the readers how Chinese people survive on their life through many rules in their culture. In The Good Earth, Buck describes briefly Chinese culture and customs where Chinese women are treated unfairly and considered to be inferior. She tries to show the reader how hard a woman has to struggle in her life as Chinese culture requires men to be strict to women. By analyzing the female major character in The Good Earth, I will be able to find out about how Chinese culture influences the life of Chinese women in China.

Statements of the Problems

1. What are the characteristics of the female major character?
2. What is the author’s purpose in creating such a character?

Purpose of the Study

1. To show the characteristics of the female major character through the novel.
2. To show the author’s purpose in creating such a character.

Method of Research

I use library research to do my analysis. First I read the book then I search for the information regarding the book that I choose to analyze. To know about the characteristics of the female major character, I begin to analyze the novel, The Good Earth as the text. Last but not least, I combine all the information that I have collected before to be able to draw the conclusion of my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis consists of three chapters and is preceded by Acknowledgement, Table of Contents, and Abstract. Chapter One is the Introduction which consists of the Background of the Study, Statements of the Problems, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two provides the discussion and the analysis. After I finish the analysis, the thesis will arrive to the Conclusion, which will be put in the Chapter Three. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and Appendices which consists of Biography of the Author and Synopsis of the Novel.