

A Comparative Study on *The Waiting Earth* (Punyakante Wijenaikē) and *The Good Earth* (Pearl S. Buck)

L. Bandaranayaka¹

In a press interview, regarding the longest novel by Punyakante Wijenaikē, *The Waiting Earth*, she has mentioned that she was influenced by *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck for crafting this novel. The novel *Good Earth* is a portrayal of Chinese rural life. In both novels, land plays a major role. In the *Waiting Earth*, Podi Singho, tries his best to own a land of his own while in the *Good Earth*, Wang Lung too takes an effort to own a land of his own. *The Good Earth* portrays cultural beliefs in the Chinese rural society, especially the myths that are prevalent in Asian societies: even the sounds of some animals are considered as good and bad omens. In the *Waiting Earth* too, there are some similar aspects. Besides the cultural beliefs of Sri Lankan rural life and their food habits, Punyakante Wijenaikē tries to bring out the corrupt aspects rooted in the Sri Lankan rural society. Similarly, she brings out issues like the misuse of the concept of free education. On the other hand, she paints a typical image of how tyrannical figures in rural villages misuse the innocence of their fellow villagers. Mainly, Wijenaikē portrays how the woman bears everything similar to the *Mother Earth*. However, in both the novels, the readers are made aware about the cultural rituals, food habits, mythical beliefs, cultural beliefs, social issues and innocent desires of villagers in rural Chinese and Sri Lankan societies. There are more similarities in these two novels. That may be due to the settings of both the novels in the Asian society. Therefore, this study compares and contrasts certain aspects of these two novels.

Keywords: Cultural beliefs, Cultural rituals, Mythical beliefs, Food habits, Social issues

¹ Former Instructor in English, English Language Teaching Unit, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Kuliyaipitiya, 1231asantha@gmail.com