

ABSTRACT

Lianawati: The Determining Factors of Gone with the Wind as a best-seller and of the unforgettable character of Scarlett O'Hara

Reading Gone with the Wind is very interesting because of the vivid development of the protagonist, Scarlett O'Hara. She became one of the memorable characters in fiction. Moreover, it is interesting that Gone with the Wind, being the first and the only novel of an unknown woman writer, could be one of the best-sellers right after it was published in 1936 despite the Great Depression at that time. There should be some factors which determine the success of Gone with the Wind and which make the protagonist, Scarlett O'Hara, an unforgettable character.

This study has two objectives, namely to find out what made the readers love to read the novel so that it became a best-seller at that time, and to find out why the readers at the Great Depression time admired Scarlett O'Hara.

The sociocultural-historical analysis to answer the first objective results in finding the similarities between the situation in the novel and that when Gone with the Wind was published. Those similarities helped the readers to comprehend Gone with the Wind better because they were experiencing similar problems. Since Gone with the Wind was published at the right time and since it told about the struggle of the protagonist who did not give up till the end, the readers loved to read it.

For the second objective, the analysis from psychological point of view reveals that the readers at that time were very impressed by the character of Scarlett O'Hara because she had strong attitudes which the readers

needed at that time. Scarlett O'Hara had a strong will, a positive thinking and bravery to cope with problems. Once she set her goal, she would never give up to gain it. The readers who had similar difficulties were motivated by Scarlett O'Hara. They could realize their abilities to overcome their problems.

Conclusively, the similarities between the readers' situation and the novel's situation, the right timing of publication and the strong-willed protagonist, Scarlett O'Hara, made Gone with the Wind a best-seller. And Scarlett O'Hara became an unforgettable character because she gave the readers insights to struggle and survive in the midst of their problems.

