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THE IMAGE OF A WOMAN IN THE KOREAN DRAMA *MY PRINCESS*

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Abstract

Korean dramas have been a favorite television program in many countries because they are commonly relaxing and cheerful and show in-fashion lifestyles. Presenting universal themes like love and family, K-dramas show deep yet subtle emotions. Many K-dramas focus on the female characters, allowing the story to be told from a female point of view, although that does not mean that the women are portrayed as powerful as or equal to their male counterparts.

This paper analyzes *My Princess* (2011), a drama about Lee Seol, a college student, who is in fact the great-granddaughter of the Joseon Dynasty's last Emperor. She undergoes difficult changes in her life to fulfill her role as a princess. Yet, in the end she leaves her position as a princess to be with the man she loves. From a feminist perspective, the analysis is conducted to discover the image of a woman in the drama. In particular, the paper describes the image in connection with Yu's ideas that while the female characters in Korean film are described as cheerful, confident, and proactive, as well as having more access to public areas and being more equal to men, they still fall into their "traditional roles as victims of the patriarchal order and comfort objects for men" (*n.d.* p. 267). The findings indicate that the woman is portrayed as a naïve, less sophisticated person who is weaker or less significant than man.

Keywords: image, woman, weaker sex, *My Princess*

Introduction

Popular culture refers to "the products of human work and thought which are (or have been) accepted and approved of by a large community or population." It tends "imitative, repetitive, and resistant to change". It "reflects as well as manipulates our hearts and minds; reflects & alters our image (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, pp.6-14). For example, once a movie or TV drama with a particular theme becomes a hit, there will be other movies and dramas carrying a similar subject. The trend is repetitive and hardly changed because the producers are reluctant to change their "recipe of success" that will satisfy the viewers. On the other hand, it is worth noticing that popular culture helps to shape as well as mirrors the society. People may accept that a certain product of popular culture is merely (creative) attempt to portray what actually