

# Heaven and Earth

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HCOM 322

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# 1) How is Le Ly Hayslip's growth portrayed in the book?

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- At the beginning, Le Ly was a normal farm girl of the village whose future was somewhat similar to what her parents had at the village. Once the war began, she became the subject of war. With that, she loses her innocence, she started to act and think like a warrior, not like a teenager. She was sexually abused and that changed her view of life.
- She left the village. Once she started working, she experienced love, and became pregnant. The fact that she had to work to be able to provide for her son, made her grow up sooner than any other teenage girl. She had responsibilities.
- Once she met Steve, she started a new cycle in life. Her life looked promising by his side.
- When they moved to San Diego, she was a submissive housewife, but this changed because of her life experience back home. She became an independent woman who was able to run a successful business.
- Le Ly started out as a farm girl who listened to her elders and didn't want to get involved in the war. However, when the war broke out and after she was tortured and abused, she became more active in her life. She became more confident and, after moving to America, became more independent.

## 2) Discuss reconciliation as a central theme in the book.

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Reconciliation is seen when Le Ly wants to become the woman her mother told her to be in the Vietnam society. When she returns to Vietnam after moving to the United States, Le Ly tries to reunite all her family and memories she had when she lived there.

### 3) What is heaven and what is earth according to Le Ly Hayslip?

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Heaven is the when you can live in a British house, make money in the United States and have chinese food with a Chinese wife.

Earth is the reality that she had to face. It is when the war started and after she had to move to the city. It is then, that she realizes how the world looks at her and how hard it is for her at that time. It is when you live in a chinese house, and are forced to eat british food, with an American wife.

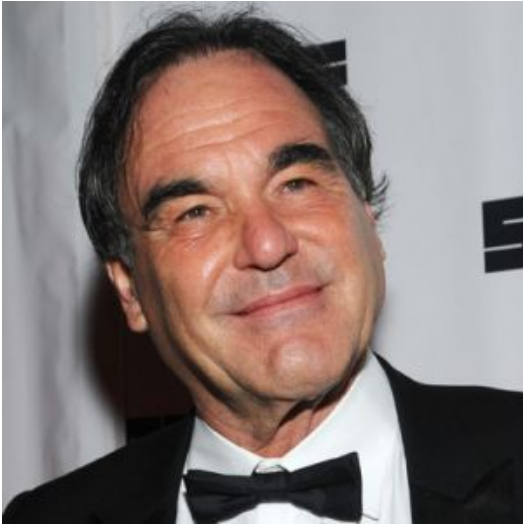
# Bonus Question

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The orientalizing through Heaven and Earth is when the American soldiers actively search for a Oriental wife. They think that oriental wives are better than American wives.

There is Latent orientalism and manifest orientalism. Latent orientalism does not change because it is the unconscious definition of the orient culture. Manifest orientalism changes because it is the visible features of the orient culture such as clothes.

## The background information about the movie



William Oliver Stone was born in New York. He is an American director, producer and writer. He briefly studied at Yale University before dropping out to teach English in South Vietnam. Later, he moved to Mexico for a year and again attended Yale for a short period. In 1967, during the Vietnam War, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He distinguished himself in combat, earning two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star. Later, Stone enrolled in film school at New York University obtaining a bachelor's degree. Now, he is well known for his controversial movies about war and violence.

# Works by Oliver Stone



-Scarface (1983)

-Salvador (1986)

-Platoon (1986)

-Wall Street (1987)

-Born on the Fourth of July (1989)

-JFK (1991)

-Natural Born Killers (1994)

-Nixon (1995)



# Central themes of the movie

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**The importance of family:** Le Ly's have a good relationships with her family, especially with her mother and father. Le Ly's mother taught her women's duties. However, Le Ly's father taught his beliefs about war and his Buddhist philosophies. Le Ly and her siblings take care of each other even though they have some conflicts.

**Identity:** Le Ly returns to Vietnam to show her children where she came from. She returns back because that is where she grew up and became the person she is now. Furthermore, she wants her children to also learn about where there roots are from in order for her to be proud of their culture.

**Independence:** Against Steve's wishes, Le Ly was able to run a successful business that she bought working hard and with the help of other Vietnamese people that knew her.

**Ancestry:** Le Ly and her family had deep ties to their ancestors; especially through their land. Even when she moved to America, Le Ly tried to keep her traditions alive and instill those values in her children.



# Character Analysis

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**Phong Trong** - Le Ly's father, with whom she shares a special bond. Trong is a rice farmer and is also a devout Buddhist. When all his family is forced to leave the village, he remains at their home to take care of his ancestral shrine. Lonely and depressed without his family and broken by war, he commits suicide by drinking acid. -Roseanne

**Tran Thi Huyen** - Le Ly's mother and her other 5 siblings. She teaches Le Ly how to be a woman and her duties as a Vietnamese lady. The Viet Cong expel her from her village and she moves to live with Le Ly to Danang and Saigon. When Le Ly returns to Vietnam, she remembers her homeland.

**Le Ly**- a Vietnamese farm girl who was able to escape the war in her country and became a successful business woman. She was very determined and hardworking woman.-Angelica

**Steve** - Le Ly's American husband. Despite claiming to love Le Ly, Steve really only loved the idea of having a "perfect, Oriental" wife. He is unable to move on from the war and eventually commits suicide. -Sarah

# Styles, techniques, cinematography

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- *Heaven and Earth* is a drama movie. It is based on the true history of Le Ly Hayslip who is a Vietnamese-American writer, memoirist and humanitarian. This movie shows to the audience the struggles Vietnamese people face during the Vietnamese War. -Roseanne
- Oliver Stone uses real-life story to emphasize what the Vietnamese struggled with during the time of war. - Ana Paola
- He also portrayed the idea that Asian woman make a good wife because they are submissive, unlike American woman. -Angelica
- The use of narration allows the viewer a better understanding of the protagonist's thoughts. This allows them to learn more about the events of the movie and the relationships between the different characters. -Sarah

# What you get out of the movie

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Angelica

From this movie I learned that when it come to war, there is no winner because both sides lose something. For example, Le Ly lose her family fighting in the war. On the other hand, Steve loses his mental health and ends up killing himself.

# What you get out of the movie

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Ana Paola

From this movie I learned that no matter what family will always be there for you. Also, how you can overcome any problem no matter the circumstances you are in.

# What you get out of the movie

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Roseanne

I learned from this movie the importance of family and how your family bonds can help you to overcome all adversities. Also, I learned about the Vietnamese War and the violence used against vietnamese people, especially women and children.

# What you get out of the movie

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Sarah

I learned the importance of staying true to yourself. Le Ly remained strong in spite of all the hardship she faced. She didn't let anything break her spirit. She used her connections with her home country and her family to overcome obstacles.

# What you get out of the movie

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Patricia

I learned that in war, the people who deal with the aftermath, are all the same. They all lose important aspects of their lives, such as family, friends, and what they call home. It doesn't matter what side you are on, they all are the same.

# Bibliography

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-Pallardy, Richard. *Oliver Stone*. Encyclopedia Britannica. 2018,

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Oliver-Stone>. Accessed 12 March 2018.