

A. SYNOPSIS

EAST WIND: WEST WIND

A Chinese woman named Kwei Lan, lived in old Chinese tradition was everything arranged by her ancestors and her parents. The traditional Chinese culture was implanted deeply in Kwei Lan. Kwei Lan might tight bandage her feet because by bound feet was an essential mark of beauty. Small feet were beautiful and sexy; therefore this custom became a fashion at that time.

Because the tradition which was handed, Kwei Lan was mated with a man whom she had not know before.

As a woman who still hold on her custom, the important thing of her life was a devotion to her husband and parents in-law and also the household. Kwei Lan was uneducated. She just learnt how to become a fully Chinese woman. She learnt too much from her mother how to prepare and serve tea to her parents-in-law, and how to behave to parents in-law and her husband.

On the other hand, her husband ever lived and studied in the West for along time. He is a modern person.

After getting married, Kwei Lan was faced with the different reality which she never got from her mother. The different reality was her husband wanted the same position between a husband and a wife. Her husband's wanted Kwei Lan to behave as a modern wife.

Kwei Lan did everything to attract her husband's attention, like she started to make up her face and to dress up. However, her husband did not like what Kwei Lan had done because her husband wanted Kwei Lan to appear naturally. Kwei Lan did not want to surrender yet, she took her harp and tried to play it. With this way, Kwei Lan could attract her husband's attention. Her husband was happy to heard it and he planned to buy a piano for Kwei Lan and hoped Kwei Lan would learn Western music. Kwei Lan felt glad to hear that.

Her husband told that it would be better if she did not bind her feet because it was not good for her health. But Kwei Lan disagreed because she still

believed with her mother say that a Chinese noblewoman had to have small feet. Big feet only for a farmer.

Kwei Lan's mother was very confused after hearing Kwei Lan's story and she could not understand what Kwei Lan's husband wanted. Kwei Lan's mother was amazed how a man can see the bones of the human being's body.

Kwei Lan's mother felt guilty because she mated Kwei Lan with a man who was not a true Chinese gentleman. Kwei Lan's mother gave the last suggestion to defend her marriage. However, if it was not change, Kwei Lan had to follow her husband's say to lose bound feet because the time was already changed. Finally Kwei Lan agreed to unbind her feet.

Kwei Lan felt that many cultural contrasts could not be accepted, because they were from different background.

When Kwei Lan told her mother-in-law that she was pregnant, her mother-in-law was very surprised. She told Kwei Lan not to prepare anything for her baby. She was not want bad Evil to know anything about the birth. She asked Kwei Lan to bundle the baby by Kwei Lan's husband

shirt. When Kwei Lan's husband heard about his mother's story he became angry.

Once day, Kwei Lan and her husband went to Western couple's house. Kwei Lan felt confused, because that woman showed her children's shirts were all white and so was the bed sheet. She is so depressed.

After her baby birth, her mother-in-law sent a letter for Kwei Lan which told that the baby must returned to her husband ancestor home. Kwei Lan understood about this tradition, but as a mother, she wanted to take care of her own baby. At the same time, Kwei Lan's husband was very angry and disagreed with his mother's plan. Like Kwei Lan's opinion, he also wanted to take care of his own baby. Through this situation, Kwei Lan started to realize that so far her husband's opinion was right. Kwei Lan was very grateful and thank God that she married with a modern man.

B. AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Pearl S. Buck, an American novelist, was born in Hillsboro West Virginia on June, 26, 1892. She spent most of her life in China, for she had been taken to live in China by her missionary parents, Absalom and Caroline Sydenstricker, since she was a few months old. This condition affected her ideas about the country as she said in her biography that China is a real home, but her mother country is a dream land (Buck, 1975:6).

"I lived with Chinese people and spoke their tongue before I spoke my own, and their children were my first friends." (Buck, 1975:20)

There she learned about a way of life, the characteristics of the people, and their daily activities, and these became a part of her youth that had been printed on her memory and could not be forgotten. In China, she firstly knew about famines, floods, and the battles of warlords, as well as a familiarity with the everyday existence of the ordinary Chinese family. This background used by her for the substance of her fiction.

"It is the Chinese and not the American novel which has shaped my own efforts in writing. My earliest knowledge of story, of how to tell and write stories came to me in China." (Cervasco, 1967:443)

Besides, her father's experiences which she always heard when her father came home from a journey had also

affected her youthful imagination. She also gained much knowledge from her "amah", the old nurse, from which heard about Taoism and Buddhism. These Chinese ideologies also affected her ideas in most of her novels.

Buck had contributed much to the Western world. She was an interpreter of the Chinese culture to the Westerners. Through her literary career she had devoted to use her intelligence as a meeting place for east and west. According to The Literary History of The United State, Pearl S. Buck built a link between the United States and China. This statement refers to all the works of Buck, especially to "The Good Earth" (Roden, 1965:72). Also her translation of the Chinese novel "All Men Are Brothers" was considered as a gift to Western readers who knew very little about Chinese literature.

Through her fiction, Buck gave real information that she dropped away the nonsensical idea and mystery of Chinese characters from the Untravelled American. Her description of the Chinese culture was completed with actuality. She dramatized the quality of Eastern life, not from the point of view of an outsider who saw it mischievously, but from the point of view of the Chinese themselves. Her oriental characters in her fictions seem real and her setting authentic (Gray, 1969:30).

"It would be hard for me to declare which side of the world is more my own. I am loyal to Asia as I am loyal to my own land." (Cevalasco,1967:443).

Actually many travellers had done the same, but it seemed that Buck was one who got the luck, as her ideas were accepted by the Westerners.

As an appreciation of her work, she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature on December 11, 1983. The Nobel Committee gave the prize "for rich and trully epic describtions of Chinese peasant life, and masterpieces of biography" (Cevalasco,1967:437). This Nobel Prize was rewarded to those who are trying to promote peace and understanding among mankind, and this what Buck had been trying to do. Buck was the only American woman to win this prize. She was eminently famous the world over for her vivid accounts of China and its people. Her position in the literary world was a little like George Eliot in relation with circle of intellectuals she dominated. Many critics called Buck "an observed and an artist" (Gray, 1969:33).

2.2 Her Works

In her Childhood, Pearl S, Buck was determined to become a writer, and the roofs of her literary career were encouraged by her mother and father. Since she was

ten, she had written her first stories, "The Shanghai Mercury". The inspiration was wholly Chinese; for in her youth she knew far more about China than she knew about the country of her birth. The sights, the smells, the joys, and the sorrows of the Chinese people, their customs, their traditions-all give reality to Pearl S. Buck's fiction (Cevasco, 1967:444).

Buck had written over seventy books, more than 200 articles, and numerous short stories. Her books were oriental literature, they are:

1. China at home

"The Good Earth", "Son", "The Mother Pavilion of Woman", "The Bondmaid".

2. China in the intellectual conflict with the West.

"East Wind: West Wind", "The First Wife", "The Young Revolutionst", "A House Divided", "the Exile", "Fighting Angel", "Kinfolk".

3. China at war with Japan.

"The Patriot", "Dragon Seed", "The Promise", "China Flight". (Cevasco, 1967:440).

Most of her works talked about the traditional Chinese, her subject matter was completely Chinese. There were two reasons why she choose this subject matter; first, her own concept of the novel is wholly Chinese;

and, second, it was intended as an illumination for the Western novel and for the Western novelist (Cevalasco, 1967:437).

She wrote her fictions realistically. She showed the true life of the Chinese people without omitting the painful condition of their life. Buck showed the facts that the country collapsed under their own inequities. The farmer, as the oppression of the communist. She showed that the aristocratic Chinese intellectuals who wanted the world to see their country as a center of cultural and good living had loved it with lies for so long (Roden, 1965:8).