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Both Sexes Relations under the Surveillance: Analysis of Jung Chang's *Wild Swans*

Qinchao Xu¹

ABSTRACT

Following the life of Grandmother, mother, and the author herself, Jung Chang's *Wild Swans* gives an account of their rough experiences and vividly presents the author's family history, and it contains the individual's joys and sorrows, turbulent history, and complex and unclear human relations. Being along with the ghosts of history, emotions become more concealed and complex, and the presentation of human nature is more intertwined with political culture, power desire. In the author's plain narrative, both sexes relations is full of tension and deformation. Cultural customs, political power, class status, moral beliefs, and other factors restrict the harmony of both sexes relations, because of which results in that both sexes relations presents an incomprehensible state. *Wild Swans* is a meditation that is difficult for both sexes to understand each other.

Mots clés: Both sexes relations; surveillance; belief; identity.

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1. Introduction

In 1991, *Wild Swains*, the first biography written by British-Chinese writer Jung Chang, was highly praised by Western readers after its publication in the United States. In the second year, Jung Chang won the NCR Award^① for British Non-Fiction Literature. British book reviewer Lucy Hughes-Hallet commented it in *The Independent*: "An extraordinary story, popular history at its most compelling. Her readiness to record life's small pleasures as well as its looming horrors is not only an index of Jung Chang's honesty and good humor, and it is a part of what makes *Wild Swans* so fascinating. To compare *Wild Swans* to sagas of the kind that fill the bestseller lists may seem to trivialise the real and deadly seriousness of its subject matter, but the book offers many of the pleasures of good historical fiction." (Chang¹) Following the life of the author's Grandmother, mother and the author herself, this biography narrates their rough experience, and it vividly presents the author's family history, and at the same time, the author surveys the history of China in the twentieth century from a uniquely personal perspective. Among them are the joys and sorrows of individuals, the turbulent history, and the complicated human

¹Qinchao Xu, professor, School of Foreign Languages of Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao 266061, mainly engaged in the study of British literature and comparative literature. Email : xuqinchao@163.com

relations. Under the shadow of a historical haze, emotions become more concealed and complicated, and humanity is more intertwined with political culture and power desire. In the author's simple and smooth narrative, the relationship between the sexes is full of tension and even deformation. Cultural customs, political power, class identity, moral beliefs, and other factors restrict the harmonious development of the relationship between the two sexes. It is for these reasons that the relationship between the two sexes presents an incomprehensible state. It can be said that from the perspective of gender relations, *Wild Swans* is a record of meditation that is difficult for mutual understanding between the two sexes.

2. Feudal women virtues and warlord's power: Yu-fang and xue zhi-heng

The subtitle of *Wild Swans* is "Three Daughters of China", namely the author Jung Chang, the author's Grandmother Yu-fang and the author's mother Xia De-hong (formerly called Baoqin). Yufang was born in 1909, and then the Manchu Empire was tottering. Later, the Manchu Dynasty was overthrown, and the warlords fighting followed. Because the then China was a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, people's lifestyles and thinking habits still followed the norms of feudal cultural customs. When males came to the world, they were keen to pursue official positions; because when they were officials, they had the power to help them make more money. Without power or money, no one could feel safe from the depredations of officialdom or random violence. And females must follow the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues (principle of feudal moral conduct), and in order to be able to marry smoothly, women's feet must be bound when they were born. In many places at the time, the little feet were considered a requirement for a happy marriage. The author's Grandmother Yu-fang was very beautiful since childhood: "She had an oval face, with rosy cheeks and lustrous skin. Her long, shiny black hair was woven into a thick plait reaching down to her waist. She could be demure when the occasion demanded, which was most of the time, but underneath her composed exterior she was bursting with suppressed energy. She was petite, about five feet three inches, with a slender figure and sloping shoulders, which were considered the ideal. But her greatest assets were her bound feet, called in Chinese 'three-inch golden lilies (san-tsun-gin-lian).'"(Chang30-31) It can be seen that feudal customs have constructed the aesthetic appeal of the public and women themselves. At that time, Xue Zhi-heng, an inspector general of Peking Police nominated by a warlord Wu Pei-fu, was attracted by Yu-fang and the three-inch golden lilies. In addition, because of the careful arrangement of Yu-fang's father Yang Ru-shan, Xue Zhi-heng took Yu-fang as his concubine. In this way, in the view of Yang Ru-shan, the Yang family has a backing, and the daughter can also enjoy life and privileges.

In the society at the time, Yu-fang was also a woman who was educated and reasonable. In order to make her marry an influential person in the future, Yu-fang's father, Yang Ru-shan, not only bound her feet when she was young but also sent her to a girls' school to learn chess and calligraphy paintings. It was also the education that she had been received since childhood. Yu-fang was different from other women. She had a kind of sense of self-awareness of women and longing for real emotional life. When she was taken as a concubine, she was a little reluctant. Facing her parents, she was sobbing and silent. She blamed her father for letting her become a concubine, but she dared not to say a "no." Violating the life planned by parents was tantamount to unfilial piety. Finally, the parents' persuasion, plus Xue Zhi-heng's status as a warlord, rich and powerful, the 15-year-old Yu-fang married Xue Zhi-heng. She also had a fantasy, hoping to win the love of Xue Zhi-heng and live a happy life. Her thoughts were nothing more than wishful thinking. Xue Zhi-heng was thirty-three years older than Yu-fang, and he had several concubines, and in his eyes, Yu-fang was just a plaything he hunted. A few days after the marriage, the two were still intimate, and Yu-fang beat his legs slightly as massage and played zither for him. In a few days, Xue Zhi-heng left the house and had no news for six years. It turned out that at the outbreak of the war, Xue Zhi-heng's old ally Feng Yu-xiang turned his side in the war. President Tsao-kun was forced to announce his resignation. At this time, Xue Zhi-heng, the deputy commander of the Peking defending army, had to flee from the capital and retired to a house in the French Concession. In this way, as a 15-year-old woman, she had to stay alone. She not only lived in loneliness but also lived in fear. Her youthful vitality has nowhere to vent, but she must also submit herself to the female ethical criteria. In Xue's family compound, she was not allowed to go out of the gate alone. Once she had a love affair stealthily, Xue's housekeeper would tell Xue Zhi-heng, and her life would not stay alive. The author mentioned one thing that before Xue Zhi-heng had not retreated. Once he went out, one of his wives and a manservant

sneaked into love. After Xue Zhi-heng knew it, he not only shot the manservant but also used the cloth to plug his wife's mouth and suffocated her. Fear and loneliness and the domestication of feudal female virtues, Yu-fang could only step into Xue's family compound. Unable to burn off her nervous energy and sexual frustration, and unable to pace the floor with a full stride because of her bound feet, she was reduced to mincing around the house. At first, she hoped for some message, repeatedly going in her mind her brief life with Xue Zhi-heng. Even her physical and psychological submission was mulled over nostalgically. She missed Xue Zhi-heng very much, though she knew that she was only one of his several concubines, and she had never imagined that she would spend the rest of her life with him. Still, she longed for him, as only he might represent her chance to live a sort of life.

The relationship between Xue Zhi-heng and Yu-fang is irrelevant to emotion. His catering for his concubines is to give them a lot of gold and silver jewelry. In old China, as a woman who had no position in the home, jewelry was the only security for women's lives. He lived in seclusion outside and also lived an everyday life. The only thing that he lost was the military power he once had. The concubines of the family must be alive for him in virtual widowhood. The end of the women was death. In the past six years, Yu-fang had always adhered to the women's virtues and still remembered her husband. It was due to the power of feudal customs and her fear of power. The superposition of the two forces made her give up her longing for freedom and placed her emotions deeply on a warlord who regarded women as playthings. Later, she was suddenly told that Xue Zhi-heng was in critical condition, and she had the opportunity to take his daughter Bao-qin to see him. He said that his daughter had turned beautiful and then closed his eyes forever. Moreover, Yu-fang still kept calling him, hoping he could come back to life. Maybe she was afraid of losing him; maybe she loved him; maybe she thought she was worthy of him because in the years he was not at home, she often missed him and obeyed the sexual morality that had lasted for thousands of years, and also nurtured the daughter for him. She was proud of this. After Xue Zhi-heng's death, it was incomprehensible that one of his concubines, surnamed Dong, swallowed opium to accompany him in death which was considered the height of conjugal loyalty. For this reason, a plaque inscribed by the famous warlord Wu Pei-fu was put up in her honor in General Xue's mansion. Xue Zhi-heng had left his last words before his death. That is, after his death, Yu-fang, who was envied by others and had no position in Xue's family, and maybe martyrdom of other members of Xue's family, allowing Yu-fang to leave Xue's mansion. This was a relatively enlightened decision at the time, so that Yu-fang could have some freedom and could return to her family or remarriage. As a twenty-four-year-old woman, she needed this freedom. Her body was free, but her life would be in difficulties. A woman without an economical source could not talk about freedom at all. She had to go from one cage to another.

3. Economic status and patriarchal concepts: Yu-fang and Xia Rui-tang

After leaving Xue's mansion, Yu-fang had to return to her father's house. Her father, Yang Ru-shan, was highly reluctant to see her. As a father, he should take care of his daughter. However, this was not the case. When he first got her daughter married, he was trying to find a patron. He did get what he wanted. He became the deputy director of the county public security bureau and became more affluent, bought some land, married two women, and sucked on opium. He liked his two concubines, but he was very indifferent to his proper wife, Yu-fang's Mother. When Yu-fang came back, it naturally added much trouble to the family. The two concubines did not like this daughter-in-law. Yang Ru-shan might never have thought that she would come back. His daughter was once married, that is, she was as split water. In addition, his backing Xue Zhi-heng had already passed away, and his attitude towards his daughter changed. It can be said that the return of her daughter had disrupted the new world he created. He regarded his daughter as a nemesis and would affect his official career, so he hoped that his daughter had better marry as soon as possible. But his daughter, who had been obedient before and after the hardships of the past ten years, became very tough. The atmosphere of the whole family was icy. She tried to endure all of these. Although her father euphemistically advised her to marry a man as soon as possible, she refused to do that. As a woman, her self-consciousness gradually awakened. Although she was a twenty-five-year-old widow, she was still beautiful and a well educated woman. Many people came to the door to ask for marrying her. However, they all wanted to marry her as a concubine. Only some people of lower status were willing to marry her as a proper wife. She had been a concubine, and she

was deeply hated for her life as a concubine. After a long time, her father was constantly badgering her to remarry, sometimes by dropping unkind hints, and the two concubines often made oblique accusations. Under the double pressure, she finally compromised and married a 65-year-old doctor, Xia Rui-tang. The former wife of Xia Rui-tang had been dead for more than ten years and had three sons and a married daughter. In the local area, he was a rich man. There were more than 2,000 mu of land, and he also owned big houses, pharmacies, and clinics. This is naturally the reason why she was willing to marry him. Another reason is that Xia Rui-tang was willing to marry her as a proper wife. The author is full of romantic sentiments when describing the understanding process between her Grandmother Yu-fang and her grandfather Xia Rui-tang. She was not happy in her father's house and slowly fell ill. Yang Ru-shan invited a famous doctor Xia Rui-tang to treat her disease:

“When he first walked into her room, he was so struck by her beauty that in his confusion he backed straight out again and mumbled to the servant that he felt unwell. Eventually, he recovered his composure and sat and talked to her at length. He was the first man she had never met to whom she could say what she really felt, and she poured out her grief and her hopes to him—although with restraint, as befitted a woman talking to a man who was not her husband. The doctor was gentle and warm, and my Grandmother had never felt so understood. Before long, the two fell in love, and Dr. Xia proposed. Moreover, he told my Grandmother that he wanted her to be his proper wife, and to bring my mother up as his own daughter. My Grandmother accepted, with tears of joy.”(Chang 60)

Yang Ru-shan is not only a person with a strong patriarchal ideology, but also a very practical person. When his daughter returned to her home as a widow and could not bring benefits to him, he became a father who showed no love to his daughter. He used to send his daughter to school to learn books of ritual so as to bring good luck to him. When Xia Rui-tang was willing to marry his daughter, his eyes twinkled with pleasure. He could get rid of a burden, and he also felt satisfied with Xia Rui-tang's fields and manors. Do Xia Rui-tang and Yu-fang admire each other? In the author's warm narrative, it seems to be the case. Both of them have their own needs. As a 65-year-old man, Xia Rui-tang wants to find a sex partner, and Yu-fang feels that she will not worry about food and clothing. In addition, Xia Rui-tang is a kind-hearted man. She is emotionally drawn from the marriage, so marrying Xia Rui-tang will be natural in her mind. In their combination, it is not the power of emotion that is particularly strong, but the economic factor plays an important role. Spiritual emotion does not exist between them, but the social structure shapes the relationship between them, although this relationship looks good compared with the relationship between Yu-fang and Xue Zhi-heng. The author seems to want to beautify the relationship between her Grandmother and Xia Rui-tang. In the biography, the author is a well-intentioned, very individual narrator. For the characters she dislikes, she always slams them in a relaxed and calm manner. She will not hesitate to praise the characters or family members she likes, though this kind of praise is not so emotional. She knows how to avoid writing biographical taboos. She does not comment, and everything she writes allows the reader to judge.

Western Christian culture always negatively evaluates women, that is, women are the root of all evil. The root of women's evil or misogyny is explained in the Genesis of the Bible: the first fall of humanity was caused by Eve stealing the forbidden fruit. She was the chief culprit of human beings who were expelled from the Garden of Eden. In China, the myth of misogyny also exists, especially for prostitutes, widows, or women who cannot preserve their moral integrity. Xia Rui-tang marries Yu-fang as a proper wife, which breaks the traditional taboos, and she is a woman who was once a concubine, which makes the other members of the family unbearable. Xia Rui-tang's eldest son sneered at Yu-fang, who was about to be his stepmother and even insulted her. He tried to persuade his father not to marry Yu-fang, and thought that Yu-fang had no “good conduct”, as he said: “How can you mention the word ‘character’ about a concubine! No good woman would have become a concubine in the first place!” (Chang65) Xia Rui-tang was greatly annoyed at his son's behavior and raised his cane to beat his son. The son reflected on his humiliation and pain. He shot himself on the grounds that “a loyal subject uses his death to remonstrate with the emperor. A filial son should do the same with his father. All I have to remonstrate with you is my death” (Chang65). Yu-fang had always been guilty about this, but the condemnation around her had aroused her resistance. She believed she was not guilty, so she resolutely married into Xia's family. But at the same time, Xia Rui-tang's eldest son committed suicide because of her. She could also observe the pain of Xia Rui-tang suffering from the eldest son's suicide. Therefore, she silently tried her best to share this psychological burden for Xia Rui-tang. She was very gentle to him for lest that she

could not take care of him. Xia Rui-tang felt that he was sorry for his children and grandchildren. He left all his family's property to his children and took Yu-fang to Jinzhou by practicing medicine for a living. Their life in Jinzhou was pretty comfortable. Xia Rui-tang's self-exile breaks away from the annoyance of the big family, taking his wife with his craft to make a full life. His behavior was shocking at the time, although the author Jung Chang believes it is a happy time for them. However, Xia Rui-tang's departure is more for his family. He wants to make his children and grandchildren live more decent, and he is reluctant to part with his young and beautiful wife. He sacrifices himself for the family. His self-exile is not for the reason that he loves his wife sincerely. The so-called utopia built by them in Jinzhou is not a mythological kingdom of love, but a kind of compulsory choice. It is also because of this self-exile that Xia Rui-tang escaped a disaster. Otherwise, the land and property he possessed after liberation are enough to make him a victim of the times. Liu Wen-cai, a landlord of Sichuan mentioned by the author in the biography, did not escape the "history trial" because he was sentenced to death after liberation. In the world of Christ, God will judge the people in the last days because they do not believe in God and Jesus Christ. Xia Rui-tang and Yu-fang had no faith, and they had an ordinary life. Later, the husband and wife followed their son-in-law, who had become an important official and came to enjoy the old age in Yi-bin, Sichuan. In 1952, the 82-year-old Xia Rui-tang died peacefully. He was buried on a hilltop in Yi-bin City, overlooking the Yangtze River. Xia Rui-tang experienced China's endless warlordism and civil war. The cruel war made him know that husband and wife should live in harmony and stay away from politics. He did not have a clear political outlook in his life. He only knew how to do a medical treatment. Because of this, the couple did not have a dispute over something. This is a relatively harmonious relationship between the couple in this biography. As an old Chinese physician, Xia Rui-tang should be deeply acquainted with the ancient Chinese yin and yang philosophy. He also knows the true meaning of self-preservation. In order to protect the family from outside interference, his relationship with the Japanese living in "Manchukuo" was also good, and he often visited Japanese military officers and gave them medical help. Furthermore, on some important matters, he would also ask for his wife's opinion. Following this principle, the couple can live a relatively harmonious life for decades, and even after liberation, they have not been affected by historical changes.

In this biography, the relationship between husband and wife before liberation rarely harmonizes with each other. It is the same even for the Japanese in "Manchuguo". When Yu-fang and Xia Rui-tang were in Jinzhou, the neighbors next to them were Japanese. Because of the war, the Japanese women's husbands were often not at home. One Japanese woman often went to Yu-fang's house to sit and talk. She was very lonely. When she spoke of her sorrow, she would also drink a little wine with Yu-fang, and both of them often dissolved into tears. Yu-fang's mother, the author's great-grandmother, was even more pitiful. After Yu-fang and Xia Rui-tang got married, the author's great-grandfather showed his disgust for her great-grandmother. The two concubines of great-grandfather also disliked her great-grandmother. The contradictions in the family became very sharp. The great-grandmother had no choice but to move to Jinzhou and live with her daughter Yu-fang. She felt that she was living off others, so she worked hard at Xia Rui-tang's house. Every day, she walked with her bound feet and carefully did housework at home for fear of offending her daughter and Xia Rui-tang. She felt that she had suffered hardships and vowed to change her into a pig or a dog in the afterlife, but not to change into a woman. She attributed her misfortune to her destiny and did not understand the ugliness of humanity in a particular history and the bad quality of cultural practices of gender inequality for thousands of years.

4. Revolution and faith: Xia De-hong and Chang Shou-yu

The author's mother, Xia De-hong, spent her childhood in Jinzhou, and her life was relatively happy. Every day, a variety of small animals accompanied her to grow up. When she was in school age, the world became terrifying. As one of the conquered people, the school must accept Japanese education, and the notion of being discriminated and that of absolute obedience instilled left a shadow of horror in her heart. That is why she did not marry a Japanese and eventually married a Communist revolutionary. Because then in Jinzhou, there were many Japanese, and the marriage of Japanese men and local women was extensively advocated at the time. Many parents were willing to marry their daughters to the Japanese. After all, the identity of the conquered people is still relatively low. It is also very glorious to be able to marry a Japanese. In the author's writing, Xia De-hong is an independent

woman. After Japan surrendered, the Kuomintang occupied Jinzhou. In 1946, Xia De-hong, a fifteen-year-old student, was enrolled at the only women's middle school in Jinzhou at that time. Then various officials came to the school to find a girl to marry as a proper wife or concubine. Some students were willing to marry because their families regarded the marriage with the officials as a bit of good luck. Xia De-hong was different from them. Because she was in the green and was very beautiful, many officials had sent people to visit her parents for proposal, but she told her parents that she "had made up her mind to choose her husband. She was disenchanted with the treatment of women and hated for the whole system of concubinage. Her parents supported her, but they were harassed by offers and had to deploy intricate, never-racking diplomacy to find ways of saying no without unleashing reprisals" (Chang108). Although the parents expressed understanding of their daughter, but still hoped that their daughter had better marry as soon as possible. In the parents' eyes, the daughter will marry sooner or later, and Xia De-hong is unwilling to marry a person who cannot give her happiness and love. Later, she met a distant relative, Cousin Hu. After contact, she gradually fell in love with Cousin Hu. Cousin Hu was a member of the Communist Party. She did not understand what the Communist Party was. She just felt that Cousin Hu was sensitive and introverted. However, gradually they loved each other. Unfortunately, Cousin Hu was later arrested and executed by the Kuomintang. It was very irritating to her, and in addition to hearing the Communist Party advocating women's liberation, she was determined to take part in the Communist Party. While the Communist Party liberated Jinzhou, she had exposed to some underground party members and secretly made some propaganda work for them. Later, the whole Northeast of China was liberated. Xia De-hong was eager to join the revolutionary work. Under the recommendation of a party representative, she came across Chang Shou-yu (then known as Wang Yu), who was managing the youth work of Jinzhou at that time. Chang Shou-yu came from Sichuan. He joined the revolution when he was young. Later, he moved to the Northeast via Yanan. He was a competent Communist Party cadre. During the contact process, Chang Shou-yu was attracted by Xia De-hong's rich female beauty. Xia De-hong appreciated Chang Shou-yu's profound knowledge of Marxist philosophy, so the two fell in love. After applying to the Party organization, the Party organization also carefully reviewed Xia De-hong's history, and then she wrote a guarantee to be loyal to the Party and promised to the Women's Federation to put the revolutionary work first. In this way, they were allowed to marry.

Xia De-hong and Chang Shou-yu became husband and wife. It is a revolutionary marriage under specific historical conditions. The growth process of the two is not the same. Chang Shou-yu was born in a merchant family in Yibin, Sichuan Province. He had loved reading since childhood. Due to the warlord's melee, the family declined, and then he went to Yanan to join the revolution. He was a firm communist believer. Xia De-hong was born in "Manchuguo". She grew up in contact with ordinary Japanese and ordinary Kuomintang officers. Most of them were not as ugly as those in the propaganda. Chang Shou-yu's loyalty to the Communist Party was absolute, and he believed that whether in public or private, the same words should be said, even if his wife was no exception. Xia De-hong was very flexible; she was of both rationality and emotion, leaving some space for herself and considering some problems in the way of humanitarianism, which was different from Chang Shou-yu's absolute loyalty.

After Xia De-hong and Chang Shou-yu got married, Chang Shou-yu was a deputy commander. He was always busy at work. Xia De-hong often sneaked into Chang Shou-yu's workroom to chat at night. After being discovered, he was severely criticized by the Party organization. Xia De-hong wrote a self-criticism on the charge of "love is supreme" rather than "revolutionary supremacy." Xia De-hong felt aggrieved and could not understand, and Chang Shou-yu said that the revolution must be like this. To establish a new China requires steel-like discipline, and everyone must obey the Party even if he cannot understand it or agree with it. In Chang Shou-yu's view, emotion is secondary, and belief is above everything else. As a woman, Xia De-hong needs faith but also needs a family. She has been balancing this relationship throughout her life. In the end, the lessons of history have brought her back to the family. Chang Shou-yu never changes his beliefs and is finally tortured to death. In the era of "the revolution identified as a high priority", sometimes the normal relationship between people often appeals to various imaginations and even may be punished by the Party organization. After the liberation of Jinzhou, there was a poet named Bian, who was Xia De-hong's good friend. The two had been to Harbin together. He was a believer in Mr. Hu Shi, a representative of the New Moon School. He sometimes read his poems to Xia De-hong, and Xia De-hong also appreciated his poetry. The New Moon School advocated pure beauty and paid attention to form in writing, mainly influenced by the British poet Keats. During the

war, he joined the Communist Party but later discovered that his poetry expression was inconsistent with the revolution. The revolution needed propaganda and agitation rather than self-expression. On the one hand, he felt that the revolution was plausible. On the other hand, he was torn and depressed, which made him no longer write poetry. His life was inseparable from poetry, so he committed suicide. Although he failed in suicide, this incident also shocked the Party organization. "It was bad for its image for people to think that anyone might be so disillusioned with Liberation that they would try to kill themselves" (Chang180) So, the Party organization investigated the cause of his suicide, and the conclusion was that he committed suicide because of the unrequited love for Xia De-hong. In the criticism meetings, the Women's Federation suggested that Xia De-hong had led Bian on and then ditched him for a big prize man, Chang Shou-yu, a senior cadre of the Party. Although the Party organization could not produce any evidence, Xia De-hong found it hard to defend herself. Bian is a sentimentalist. He only wants to immerse himself in his poetry kingdom. The reality does not allow him to do so. His aesthetic pursuit conflicts with reality seriously. He wants to commit suicide, but his motive for suicide has become a political issue, and people who have had a relationship with him also have political problems. Normal gender relations in political maps sometimes become stains on the map, and the depicter of the map interprets the definition of the stain. How about the attitude of Chang Shou-yu at this time? He knows that his wife is being treated unjustly, but he is absolutely adherent to the Party organization's investigation as a senior cadre. Xia De-hong's disappointment with him is naturally inevitable. She can only bury her pains in her heart. Emotions and power are sometimes uncontrollable for couples; truth and lies for the weak sometimes are unexplained.

There is an effective way to destroy people in China, that is, to start a rumor that there is an improper relationship between men and women. Sex is a taboo topic to talk about. Once sex becomes a weapon of attack, it often makes a person lose all his or her reputation. Xia De-hong, who was full of hope for a new life, had become suspicious and unhappy because of her relationship with Bian. Fortunately, she did not commit suicide, and she felt that the best way was to leave the bad environment of Jinzhou. She persuaded her husband to apply to the Party organization to transfer to her husband's hometown, Yibin. Their application was approved by the Party organization, mainly because the country had just been liberated, and the southwest was still not very peaceful. Soldiers needed to go there to fight local bandits.

Xia De-hong and Chang Shou-yu got married because they believed in revolution. Similarly, they could not understand each other, which deepened in the revolution. For Chang Shou-yu, there is no compromise for class enemies. He is a thoroughly essentialist. After they arrived in Yibin, Xia Dehong was assigned to the Propaganda Department as an officer, mainly responsible for collecting grain from the countryside. Once encountered by the bandits and a mayor of the Kuomintang period was also in the bandit team. He wanted to change his life and did not want to do anything for the bandits. He helped Xia De-hong and another woman get rid of the bandits' search and pursuit. Later the bandits were defeated, and the mayor was arrested and executed. Xia De-hong pleaded with her husband and hoped to forgive the mayor. After all, it is the mayor who saved her and another woman's life. The trial team composed of Chang Shou-yu and the district public security bureau resolutely sentenced the mayor to death. At that time, Chang Shou-yu also patted the table and said: "We cannot be lenient, precisely because our wives are involved if we let personal feeling influence our judgment, what would be the difference between the new China and the old?" (Chang211) What Chang Shou-yu did deeply hurts Xia Dehong. For the mayor, she always bears guilt and uneasiness. For her husband, she tries to understand him but cannot. In the gap between morality and faith, she does not know what to do; maybe she needs to repent or leave her husband, who cannot understand her. Of course, she does nothing.

Does Chang Shou-yu love his wife? When power becomes a means of terror, love also seems helpless or to be replaced by indifference. The author mentioned in the biography that in 1955, the political movement of "eliminating counter-revolutionaries hidden inside the revolutionary ranks" swept across the country. Xia De-hong's family had previously been associated with the Kuomintang, which was only a kind of regular interpersonal communication in society at that time. Despite all this, Xia De-hong became the target of "internal counter-revolutionary elimination" and was censored by the authorities. She was asked when she was a student in Jinzhou. Many of her classmates joined the Kuomintang and

later became counter-revolutionaries; why did she not join the Kuomintang? She was puzzled by these issues, but she was still full of confidence in the party:

“There were long nights when she lay awake, unable to stifle her bitterness at her unfair treatment. As she listened to the whining mosquitoes outside the net over her bed in the airless heat of the summer, then the autumn rain pattering on the window, and the damp silence of winter, she chewed over the unfairness of the suspicions against her—particularly the doubts about the arrest by the Kuomintang. She was proud of the way she had behaved then, and had never dreamed it would become the reason for her becoming alienated from the revolution.

But then she began to persuade herself that she should not resent the Party for trying to maintain its purity.” (Chang 265)

In this lonely state, Xia De-hong's only emotional support is the family. She was eager for her husband Chang Shou-yu to phone her or come to comfort her. As a senior cadre at that time, he could do it, but he did not even telephone her. She could not forgive him for being indifferent. But her husband's logic is that as a senior cadre of the Party, comforting his wife is a distrust of the party. When his wife needed love and support most during this time, he did not give her; he put the Party in the first place. Can you say that he is an upright person? An upright person should be someone who insists on the truth or makes a judgment based on facts. It states that he is a political person. His religious feelings are fully reflected in his infinite loyalty and trust in the Party. However, it is his integrity that has also hurt him. During the Cultural Revolution, Chang Shou-yu had served as an important minister of propaganda in Sichuan Provincial Party Committee. He could not understand the Cultural Revolution. He believed that everything that happened at that time was wrong because even the most basic rights and guarantees of the people were gone. As a member of the Communist Party, he has a responsibility to stop the disaster. So he wrote to the Party Central Committee. His wife kept a sober mind on the history of the time and tried to stop him. She thought that what he was going to do was to seek his own doom like moths flying into the fire. However, he did it according to his own ideas. As a result, his letter arrived in the hands of the rebel group. He became the target of criticism of the rebel group and was finally assigned to the cadre school to do manual labor. The long-term criticism and torture had caused him to be in mental disorder. Thus he was called "Madman Chang" by the rebel group. His personality was insulted, and he was hurt morally and physically, and finally, he was eaten up with a disease. In 1972, he was released from the cadre school and soon died. When he died, he might understand what his wife had said to him.

5. Identity and passion: Jung Chang and her favorite males

As the daughter of Chang Shou-yu and Xia De-hong, the biographer Jung Chang, who lived in the provincial party committee compound since childhood, is a princeling. At school, her identity made many ordinary boys afraid to approach her. Her indifference to the opposite sex has many reasons. In addition to the superiority of the princelings, during the Cultural Revolution, as a red guard who yearned for going to Tiananmen Square in Beijing, the political passion strongly dominated the generation like her, thus resulting in that young students had no way to develop their youthful sex consciousness. Of course, sexual fear was also one of the reasons. Some red cadres who freed themselves in sex caused them to be in danger. As the author wrote in the biography: “I suppose many Chinese girls of my generation were too dominated by the crushing political upheavals to develop adolescent sex feelings. But not all. The disappearance of parental control meant it was a time of promiscuity for some. When I got home I heard about a former classmate of mine, a pretty girl of fifteen, who went off with some red cadres from Peking. She had an affair on the way and came back pregnant. She was beaten by her father, followed by the accusing eyes of the neighbors, and enthusiastically gossiped about by her comrades. She hanged herself, leaving a note saying that she was ‘too ashamed to live.’ ” (Chang 421-422) It is the conflict between the feudal view of shame and the Cultural Revolution that leads to the death of this girl, which also leads to the distortion of the relationship between the two sexes.

Later, Jung Chang's parents were sent to the cadre school for reform, which was undoubtedly a huge blow to her soul. She became a descendant of the “bourgeois-democrats”. Even so, her identity as a princeling still has a great impact on her handling of sex relations. From 1972 to 1973, in order to become an urban residence, Jung Chang went to work in a factory in the eastern suburb of Chengdu through recruitment. She became an electrician and the only female one in the factory. There is a young man surnamed Day in the electrician team. He studied in high school before the cultural revolution, so he is

considered a person with high educational level. In addition, he is a calligrapher and can play several musical instruments beautifully. Jung Chang likes him very much. Every morning, they often greet each other while meeting. They also work in the same workshop and love each other. "One early spring day, after finishing a maintenance job, we spent the lunch break leaning against a haystack at the back of the foundry, enjoying the first sunny day of the year. Sparrows were chirping over our heads, fighting for the grains left on the rice plants. The hay gave off an aroma of sunshine and earth. I was overjoyed to discover that Day shared my interest in classical Chinese poetry, and that we could compose poems to each other using the same rhyme sequence, as ancient Chinese poets had done. In my generation, few people understood or liked classical poetry"(Chang 598) In the factory, they try to find opportunities to get close to each other. When they get close, there seems to be a special current between them, which makes them excited and nervous. Brushing each other's fingers and saying a word will cause each other's reverie. They just communicate cautiously and sweetly, and soon Jung Chang begins to hear gossip that Day is unworthy of her. This is mainly because she is the only princeling in the electrician team. Although Jung Chang's parents have been labeled as "bourgeois-democrats", her former status as a princeling still makes her the envy of many people. Another reason is that Day's father had been a Kuomintang officer and had been in a labor camp. The identity of the son of the "reactionaries" is very different from that of the daughter of the "bourgeois-democrats" in an era when class struggle is above all else. In fact, Day's father by chance becomes an officer of the Kuomintang. In 1937, he and two friends traveled a long way to Yan'an to participate in the Communist Party to fight against the Japanese. When they had almost researched Yan'an, the Kuomintang's roadblock stopped them and urged them to join in Kuomintang instead. While the two friends insisted on pressing on to Yan'an, Day's father stayed and became a Kuomintang soldier, thinking it did not matter which Chinese army he joined, as long as it fought the Japanese. After the victory of the war of fighting against the Japanese, he and the two friends became enemies during the civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. After 1949, he was sent to a labor camp, while his companions became high-ranking officers in the Communist army.

It is because of this accident of history that Day became a person with "bad family background" for not knowing his place by pestering Jung Chang, and even for being a social climber. From his gloomy face and bitter smile, Jung Chang could see that he was deeply stung by the snide gossip. Originally full of longing for love and life, he felt anxious and painful in the gossip. When only the two of them were together, he appeared inferior and depressed. In public, he clumsily and somewhat flatteringly tried to show others that he didn't actually like Jung Chang. At times Jung Chang felt that he behaved in such an undignified way that she could not help being irritated as well as saddened. Jung Chang, who grew up in a special background, did not understand Day's inner contradiction. He could not openly express his love to her because he was afraid of destroying her. In this way, the two of them gradually alienated. During the four months of their acquaintance, the word 'love' had never been mentioned by either of them. At that time, people could not let themselves go, because the vital factor of family background was always like a huge shadow over everyone's heart. The consequences of being tied to the family of "class enemy" like Day's were too serious, so she suppressed her feeling in her mind and never fell in love with Day.

Jung Chang later also met other men she liked, but as the class struggle has become increasingly fierce, the identity of the daughter of the "bourgeois-democrats" has made her more and more despised by people. Her inferiority and loneliness made her more autistic. She interacted with a member of the opposite sex but never to have affection with them. She was eager to rush out of the shackles but had successfully locked it up. She was always in an anxious state about the relationship between the sexes. This selfless day lasted until 1978, and Jung Chang was fortunate to be sent to study in the West. At that time, China was becoming open and fair. She could liberate herself and pursue her happiness, but the years she lost had been buried in her memories of bitterness forever.

6. Summary

Wild Swan is a biography of family history and political history, in which the author's focus is not to explore the relationship between the two sexes but to describe the fate of individual life in the tide of history. Due to particular parentage and family encounters, the author's views on some historical events and characters are inevitably personal, and even some views are too extreme. However, in the author's straightforward narrative, the relationship between the two sexes reveals more deeply the role of

cultural psychology and political ecology in individual destiny. The internal conflict of the relationship between human nature and politics has deepened the tragic implications of this biography. Memory can preserve love, but this biography presents tasteless, variegated and oppressive love.

Note

①The NCR Book Award is based in 1987 and covers the history of politics, politics, science, sports, tourism, and biography. Replaced in 1999 by the Samuel Johnson Prize, it is one of the most prestigious non-fiction writing awards.

References

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