

**THE EFFECT OF CONFUCIANISM TO THE MAIN CHARACTERS'
ATTITUDE TOWARDS THEIR FRIENDSHIP AND THEIR MARRIAGE
IN *SNOW FLOWER AND THE SECRET FAN* BY LISA SEE**

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Abstrak

Setiap negara di dunia memiliki identitasnya masing-masing. Cina adalah salah satu yang memiliki tradisi eksotik sejak berabad-abad yang lalu. Salah satu tradisi tersebut adalah *footbinding*. Terlebih lagi rakyat Cina sangat percaya pada ajaran konfusianisme yang sangat mementingkan budaya patriarki. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisa representasi ajaran konfusianisme pada karakter-karakter utama dalam yaitu *Snow Flower and Lily* tentang persahabatan dan pernikahan mereka dalam novel *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. Dalam novel tersebut, doktrin *confucianism* telah mempengaruhi kehidupan para karakter utama terutama dalam kehidupan persahabatan dan pernikahan mereka. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk menganalisa perilaku dan kehidupan pernikahan para karakter utama sebagai imbas dari budaya konfusianisme. Teknik pengumpulan data pustaka digunakan sebagai metode dalam penelitian ini. Untuk dapat menjawab pertanyaan yang ditujukan untuk penelitian ini, karakter dan setting sebagai elemen dari fiksi dijelaskan terlebih dahulu, yang kemudian dilanjutkan dengan penjelasan tentang persahabatan dan pernikahan dalam budaya konfusianisme di Cina. Kesimpulan yang dapat diambil dalam penelitian ini adalah konfusianisme memiliki pengaruh terhadap para karakter utama dalam berperilaku terhadap persahabatan dan pernikahan mereka. Salah satu karakter mengubah perilakunya terhadap persahabatan dan mampu mendapatkan keberuntungan dalam kehidupan pernikahannya sebagai efek dari konfusianisme.

Kata kunci: Sastra, *Footbinding*, Konfusianisme

Abstract

Most countries have culture to show their identity in the world. China is one of them which has exotic tradition from others since century years ago. One of the exotic traditions was known as footbinding. Furthermore, Chinese mostly believes Confucianism as a study in their life and conceives of every organization as a patriarchy. The goal of the study is to present the impact of Confucianism to the main characters, Snow Flower and Lily, towards their friendship and their marriage shown in the novel, Snow Flower and the Secret Fan. The doctrine of Confucius or Confucianism that they do when they were children has influenced their life, especially to their friendship and their marriage. The study also wants to find out their attitude and their marriage as the effect of Confucianism. Library research is used as the research method in this study. To answer the problem, the study explains about characters and setting, which are parts of elements of fictions. It also explains about friendship, marriage in China, and

Confucianism itself. It can be concluded that Confucianism has an effect to the main characters' attitude toward their friendship and their marriage. One of the main characters' attitude has changed her friendship and got lucky in her marriage because of Confucianism.

Keywords: Literature, Footbinding, Confucianism

INTRODUCTION

Most countries have culture to show their identity in the world. China is one of them which has exotic tradition from others since century years ago. One of the exotic traditions was known as footbinding. Most of Chinese Hughes & Hughes (1984) stated that footbinding had happened in the late Song or the early Ming dynasty. When women at five or six years old, their feet were bound even more tightly by their mother until the soles and heels were in very closed. Bound feet were done as a requirement as the dowry for women whose marriage out of the given family. They were also as a requirement for poor family by sending their daughter to serve in the home of a wealthy member of a gentry. Footbinding also regarded as the perfection of a beauty which was the limb had to tapers from its socket to the foot without any risings or inflection (Lay, 1841).

According to Chang (1991) when a woman was married, the first thing of the bridegroom's family did was to examine her feet. Large feet, meaning normal feet, were considered to bring shame on the husband's household. So, it meant that bound feet were better than large feet. It is clearly stated that footbinding is very crucial in China's marriage. It is the requirement for the girl who wants to marry and be accepted by her husband's family, especially by mother-in-law. If a girl has large feet or normal feet, she just will bring shame on the husband's household and will be ashamed in front of public in her wedding.

Jaschok & Miers (1994) stated that before the wedding happened, a

poor little girl was transferred from her house to the husband's family in particular form of early engagement. This was called *san po tsai*. In this wedding, the girl's parents were relieved to treat her daughter. In this case, she has powerless to influence her fate and could be trained as a submissive daughter-in-law. But, she got a lucky enough to bear a baby boy, she could expect in her turn to become mother-in-law. Jaschok & Miers also added that a mother-in-law had higher status than *san po tsai*. Her power over the *san po tsai* was much greater than older female members of the household. She felt that she had power when a younger woman came as her son's wife. As a result, she would be free from her house duty.

A research question formulated in this study is to know how Confucianism affect the main characters' attitude; Lily and Snow Flower toward their friendship and their marriage in *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. This study is also to present the reader's understanding and to give further explanation about the doctrine of Confucius that has affected the main characters' friendship and their marriage based on novel-*Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*. The writer used the theory of characters and Confucianism which relate to the main characters attitude and their life.

RESEARCH METHODS

In writing this paper, the writer used the library research. There were some steps need to be done. First, the writer went to library and Kinokuniya to find the novel which was going to be analysed. Second, after finding the novel

the writer read, re-read the *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See until got the meaning and knew how it was going to be analysed. The writer needed 2 months to comprehend the content of its novel. First month, the writer focused on problems which consisted while reading the novel. Next, the writer narrowed them and picked one problem only which were going to be analyzed. Next, the writer searched the theories which relate to its problem. The writer went to several libraries; Binus University, National Library, and University of Indonesia library which had the sources to support the analysis of this research. In addition, the writer also put some sources taken from internet to complete the information the writer needed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Effect of Confucianism to Lily's Attitude Towards her Friendship

Snow Flower's wedding performed modestly which was only attended by her mother. Lily's family and a few guesses. In the wedding, Lily helped Snow Flower by looking for some unmarried girls to cheer up the atmosphere of wedding. by making the third-day of wedding book which was about Lily's introduction to Snow Flower's new family and singing good-bye.

In addition, Lily suggested Snow Flower that a woman had not to hate her husband's lack. A woman should serve, obey her husband, and should help her husband's family to get higher social:

"A good woman should not detest her husband's disadvantage," I sang. remembering "The Tale of Wife Wang," "I-help lih your family to a better state, serve and obey your husband." (See, 2006: p.168)

As it is stated above, it is clearly seen that Lily gives suggestion and reminds Snow Flower that as a woman, she has low position in the household. She must obey her husband because in Confucianism, woman is recognized as subordinate. Lily also says that Snow Flower must not hate her husband's destiny and must help her husband's family to get higher social.

After getting married, women were really hoped for deliver a baby boy. It was because a baby boy was recognized more useful and worthy than a baby girl. In addition, a baby boy could continue the patriarchy and save his mother's position in her husband family. So, when Lily got letter from Snow Flower, telling that she delivered a baby boy, Lily was happy like in heaven and hoped for Snow Flower's position would save her in the household:

Two years later, Snow Flower sent me a letter announcing that she had finally given birth to a second son. She was jubilant and I was elated, believing that her status would rise in her husband's home. (See, 2006. p.224)

In addition, having a baby boy would protect his mother's position from other woman in the household. Because if a wife did not deliver a baby boy, her mother-in law would find other woman to be her husband's concubine to replace her position in the household. So, when a wife got miscarriages, she had to try to be pregnant again until she got a baby boy—When Snow Flower got miscarriages, Lily gave her sympathy by sending a letter and said to be pregnant again and reminded her of her duty as a woman—bear a baby boy:

When I picked up my brush. I retreated to safety of the formal lines appropriate for a married woman. Hoping this would remind Snow Flower that our only real protection as women was the placid face we presented. even in those moments of greatest distress. She had to try to pregnant again-and soon-because the duty of all women was to keep trying to give birth to sons. (See, 2006: p2 19)

From those quotations above, it is clearly known that a baby boy has higher position. more useful and worthy than a baby girl in family as he can continue the patriarchy. He also can change and save his mother's position in the household; from a wife who always duties household becomes a wife who has high position and rights to manage as much as she likes. Therefore, when Snow Flower delivers a baby boy, Lily is happy and hopes for her baby boy can change Snow Flower's position in her husband's family. Then, when Snow Flower gets miscarriages, Lily suggests Snow Flower to be pregnant again and reminds her duty as a wife-deliver a baby boy.

However, Lily's sympathy and her attitude to Snow Flower was different since she replaced her mother-in-law's position as a Lady Lu: a respected woman in the county and always followed all the rules of tradition-obeyed her husband and mother-in-law and gave them son. Lily's attitude changed from an obedient daughter into a woman who Was strict to the rules. It was shown when she was impatient seeing Snow Flower's Suffering and her unhappiness-always got miscarriages, the cruelty of her mother-in-law and her husband who always hit her if she got miscarriages

and delivered a baby girl Lily forced Snow Flower to follow all the rules of tradition:

I look back now and see with the clarity of eighty years that I showed far too much impatience with Snow Flower's despondency. In the past, whenever I had been unsure of how to react to my Mother-in-law's unhappiness. I had pressured her to follow the rules and Indium of the inner realm as a way of combating the bad things that happened in her life. (See, 2006: p.287)

From the quotation above, it is stated obviously how Lily forces Snow Flower to follow the rules of tradition. Lily gets Snow Flower to do that as a way to make Snow Flower has a happy marriage life. Lily also forces Snow Flower to deliver a baby boy as she is impatient seeing Snow Flower's suffering.

Lily's attitude as a Lady Lu was shown not only forcing Snow Flower to follow the rules of tradition but also criticizing and looking down on her. Lily was successful to make Snow Flower looked down in public by telling bad life of Snow Flower's Family in the past-Snow Flower's father was an addictive opium and had embarrassed his family. Lily also criticized Snow Flower to what she did and criticized her as a liar-denied the friendship promise by having other girls. Hearing what Lily talked made Snow Flower was sad and told that she had done whatever Lily asked. But, Lily only criticized and misunderstood to what Snow Flower did:

Snow Flower took a deep quivering breath. "You once asked that I always tell you the truth, but when I tell it to you,

you misunderstood or you don't like what you hear. I have found women in my village who do not look down on me. They do not criticize me. They do not expect me to be someone I am not. (See, 2006: p.304)

From the quotation, it is clearly seen that since Lily becomes a Lady Lu, her attitude has changed. She criticizes Snow Flower more and looks down whatever Snow Flower does because Lily feels, she has high position as a Lady Lu and acts through her desires. Eventually, it makes Snow Flower prefer talking to her sadness and her marriage to someone else, as by talking to someone else as Snow Flower is not looked down and to criticized.

The Effect of Confucianism to Lily's Attitude Towards her Marriage.

At the end of her wedding, Lily went to her mother-in-law by carrying thresholds; cloth's» shoes, and blankets which were specially made by herself to be given to her husband and her husband's family. Although the thresholds were not expensive, it showed Lily's obedience to them. When she arrived at her husband's house. she said in her deep heart that she would obey, work diligently and pour tea to her husband's family:

She led me to my new home. where I stepped over the threshold and was presented to my in-laws. I knelt before them. touching my head to the ground three times. "I will obey you," I said. "I will work for you. "Then I poured tea for them." (See. 2006: pp.144-145)

From Lily's speaking "I will obey you," I said. "I will work for you. "Then I poured tea for them" shows that as a daughter-in-law, Lily promises in

her heart that she will obey her husband and her mother-in-law. She will also pour tea as her devotion to mother-in-law and her husband as in. the rules of tradition.

After being married, Lily lived with her husband's family. All duties of household as a new wife had waited for her since she came to her husband's house for the first time. As a result, it was difficult for Lily and Snow Flower to meet and talk as usual before they got married. Yet, they still met secretly and sent letter with a help from Madame Wang, a fortune teller as a sender.

Finally, their friendship was known by Lily's mother-in-law. She said to Lily that her mother-in-law was thankful to what Snow Flower had done. such as teaching to write *nu shu*; a secret writing for women only, teaching good attitude on the dining table and teaching how to sew and embroidered. But. Lily's mother-in-law did not want something bad happen to her grand-son because their friendship and Snow Flower's low position as 5th: was married to a butcher. Lily was just quiet and listened whatever her mother-in-law 's said:

I listened to Lady Lu's excuses. but I knew her reasons were far more base. Snow Flower's natal family was disgraced and she'd married polluted man. My in-laws simply didn't want me to associate With her. (See, 2006: p.205)

As it is stated above, it is clearly known that Snow Flower and Lily's friendship is forbidden by Lily's mother-in-law and her in-laws. The reason is because Snow Flower is married to a man who has low position. It is also because Lily's mother-in-law considers Snow Flower is not appropriate to make friendship with Lily, who has high status. Lily just listens to her mother-in-law's words and obeys her order.

A few months later after Lily had married, the typhus came and spread to all villages included Tongkou-her husband village. The typhus had infected to all villagers included her husband's parents and her children. As a wife and a mother, Lily had a main duty to take care of them. Yet, she had to make choice who was the first one that she would take care. Lily decided to prefer taking care of her husband's parents to her children because if she did not well until they died, she would get shame forever:

Now I had a terrible choice to make. I had kept my children protected in my room, but my duty as my husband's wife was to his parents above all else. To serve them did not just mean bringing them tea in the morning, washing their clothes, or accepting criticism with a smiling face. Serving them meant that I should esteem above everyone else-above my parents, above my children. With my husband away, I had to forget my fear of the disease, expel or feelings for my children out my heart, and do the correct thing. If I didn't and my mother-in-law died, my shame would have been too great. (See, 2006: pp.236-237)

From the quotation above, it is clearly stated that Lily's attitude to take care of her husband's parents when they are sick is because of her duty and her dedication to her husband's parents. Lily must do the rules of tradition 'if she does not want to get shame: She also must throw away her fear that she will be infected. Moreover, she must be willing to put aside her children and put them in the first place. It shows that her husband's family have more authorities to make her do everything. It also shows that Lily is only the subordinate. As the

subordinate, she must obey and follow their order.

The typhus had caused Lily's parents in-law to die. Because of their death. Lily's life changed from daughter-in-law to a Lady Lu; a very respected woman, a woman whose speaking and her acting always be listened and became leader for other women in her village. The changing that Lily got is because she had many sons than other in-laws who were in the household. Now, all women in Tongkou respected and obeyed Lily including her in-laws:

And, because my mother-in-law died, I became the head woman of the household, though my husband was still away. Now the sisters-in-law would have to answer to me. They would need to remain in my good graces to receive favorable treatment. (See, 2006: p.238)

From the quotation above, it is clearly seen that because of having sons, Lily gets high position after she replaces her mother-in-law's position when she died. She also becomes a woman who has power in the household. Now, all women in her village even her in-laws must obey and follow what she says.

A wife was worried if she could not deliver a baby boy because a baby boy would affect her position in the household. Lily was lucky because she delivered a baby boy. The worry she thought that something bad happened to her would be replaced by delivering a baby boy:

I secured my place by being the First daughter-in-law then by giving my husband his First son. As soon as my baby was born and the midwife put him in my arms, I was so blissful that I forgot the pain of child birth and so relieve that I didn't worry about all the bad things

that could still happen to him.
(See, 2006: p.198)

As it is stated above, it is clearly seen that having a baby boy effects his mother's position in the household. Lily is pleased because she is the first daughter-in-law who deliveries a baby boy in her husband's family. She is also pleased because her position it! the household is safe. She is not worried that bad things will happen to her, such as her position will be replaced by other women as her husband's concubine or her mother-in-law will also recognize Lily as a worthless wife.

The Effect of Confucianism to Snow Flower's Attitude Towards her Friendship

In Lily's wedding, Snow Flower was so loyal to accompany Lily before and after the wedding. However, when Lily left Snow Flower to go and stay in her in-laws, Snow Flower missed her because she wquld separate and thought she would not meet her again. But in Snow Flower's letter, she realized and told Lily if it was their fate born as daughter:

I though we would have out whole lives together. I never believed this day would come. It is sad that we came into the wrong-as girls-but this is our fate. (See, 2006: pp.143-144)

From the quotation above, it is clearly stated that Lily and Snow Flower can not meet as usual after they get married because they must do the duty of household. Snow Flower also reminds Lily that they must not regret because it is their fate as a girl and now was as a wife, who must live with their husband forever.

Snow Flower was sick and her pain was never cure. Her condition was

weak and i! made Lily asked herself what actually happened to Snow Flower's wedding. Lily knew the truth after Snow Flower told that her marriage was unhappy; either her husband, who always hit her if she delivered a baby girl or her stingy mother-in-law who cut down her eating and only gave a few grains of rice and clear porridge. But, Snow flower did not want to say all things because she did not want to make Lily worried. I! can be shown by her speaking:

"Why didn't you tell me?" She answered with a question of her own. "Why should I trouble you with things you cannot change?" (See, 2006: p.286)

The quotation above shows how Snow Flower's attitude towards unhappiness wedding condition. The word "Why should I trouble you with things you cannot change?" clarifies that Snow Flower does not want to make Lily think about her marriage and her suffering because it is Snow Flower's fate, which can not be changed by someone else even by her best friend, Lily.

Snow Flower's pain became worse and made her die. After Snow Flower died, the truth appeared that three Sworn Sisters; Plum Blossom, Willow and Lotus were just Snow Flower's student. She taught them how to read and to write *nu shu* well—the secret writing for women only. As a payment they listened and also felt what Snow Flower felt. From their story, it had just been known that Lily's affection was not honest and only focused on the tradition. Every time Snow Flower had miscarriages, Lily Showed her sincerely sympathy only by saying to be pregnant again. Whatever Lily said, Snow Flower believed in her and did what she asked:

"Every time she left a baby. you offered no more sympathy than her husband or mother-in-law." Willow "cut on. "You always said that her only worth was from giving to sons. and believed you. You told her to try again. and she obeyed. (Sec. 2006: p.320)

From the quotation above. it is clearly obviously that Snow Flower always obeys whatever Lily says. That is not only because Lily is a Lady Lu; the woman who stricts the rules of tradition but also she is Snow Flower's best Friend. Lily's love only focuses on tradition, Which is, if Snow Flower deliveries a baby boy, Lily will expect Snow Flower. Then. When Snow Flower gets miscarriages, it is not the sympathy she gets but the pressures to be pregnant again.

The Effect of Confucianism to Snow Flower's Attitude Towards her Marriage

The life of Snow Flower was unlucky and was not like Lily's life. Although both of them did footbinding, but their fate was different. It was caused by Snow Flower's father wealth was not endure for long time because he had to pay all his sisters' wedding. In addition, it was because Snow Flower's father behavior which liked smoke opium and was recognized as an underestimated person in Tongkou society. Because of her father's behavior, it affected to Snow Flower's wedding, which had to marry a butcher:

"I will be marrying out to nearly Jintian village, just as auntie Wang said, but my husband's family"---again she hesitated-"they are butchers." (Sec, 2006: p 160)

From the quotation. it is clearly seen that the father's wealth and his position in society and also the perfection of bind feet affect his daughter's future life. It happens to snow Flower, who only marries a butcher "he has low position.

Snow Flower's father behavior also embarrassed his family and his daughter, W" in her marriage, no one girls came to entertain and sing for her She felt sad about her tragic life and submissive her future life because nobody could change and refuse it:

Snow Flower's future. on the other hand. looked bleak. No one could deny or change that,... "Mama. "Snow Flower chanted one day. "Babe failed to plant me on a sunny hill. I will live in the shade forever." (See, 2006: p.167)

Snow Flower's fate continued when in her wedding, she was not only unlucky in delivering a baby boy because she always got miscarriages but also got a cruel and unkind husband and mother-in-law:

My husband is not kind. My mother-in-law is cruel. I have been pregnant seven times, but only three babies breathed the air of this world. Now only a son and a daughter live. (See. 2006' p.300)

From those statements above, it is clearly seen that no one can change someone's fate although it is bad or good fate. Snow Flower is only submissive when her father cannot change her fate, when she always gets miscarriages. and when she gets a cruel and unkind mother-in-law.

When Snow Flower met Lily in Temple of Gupo; a place for women to

praise to get son, she told Lily about her husband who often hit her if she delivered a baby girl and got miscarriages. Hearing from Snow Flower's story, Lily made a protest that Snow Flower could not light back and only accepted, which is shown in her speaking:

Far worse the butcher had not stopped beating. her. "Y on said he "only not do it again. "I protested. not wanting to believe "hat my husband had seen clearly. "If assaults me. "hat can I do, I can't light back." (See. 2006: p.206)

From the statement above, it is clearly seen that as a wife, Snow Flower has low position and her husband has high position in the household, which is shown by her words "If assaults me, what can I do? I can't fight back." The words of Snow Flower clarifies that as a wife, she cannot do anything and only submit her life. Because of the tradition, Snow Flower must obey and respect her husband whatever he has done.

CONCLUSION

Lily is from poor family who lives in Puwei. She is an obedient, bad-tempered, and arrogant daughter. Her life and her family's condition starts changing when her feet are bound. Because of her perfect feet shape she is married to a rich and respected husband from Tongkou, the richest Village in her area. But, it is contradictory to her friend, Snow Flower who is only married to a cruel and disrespected husband from Jintian family. It is caused by her imperfect feet and her father's bad behavior that has shamed his family in society. The first attitude that Lily shows to her friendship is after being married to a rich husband and becomes a Lady Lu, a respected woman in the

county and always follows the rules of tradition. Because of her high status, she wants Snow Flower to follow all what she asks. Besides, Lily forces Snow Flower to follow rules of tradition such as deliver a baby boy, obey to parents, husband and son as a way to get happy marriage in her life.

In Lily's marriage, her attitude is shown by her respecting and her obedience to her parents-in-law. When they are sick, she is prefer taking care of them to her children. It is done in order to not to get shame forever in society and considered as disobedient daughter-in-law. In other side, Snow Flower's attitudes to her friend, Lily, shown by a taste of her belief and her obedience to follow Whatever Lily says, follow rules of tradition as she did in her marriage. Unfortunately, whatever Snow F lower did, it is unsuccessful and cannot change her life and her marriage.

In Snow Flower's marriage, she is submissive when she gets married to a cruel husband from disrespected family. He always hits her if she gets miscarriages and deliveries a baby girl. She can do nothing because of her low position in the household. She is also submissive to her unhappy marriage. Whatever She does that Lily asks it cannot change her marriage and her destiny.

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