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Modern Chinese Literature

In Yenan, Ding Ling defended her literary independence and exposed problems in communistic society leading itself to a conflict with the Party authorities. The story "When I was in Xia village" represents the injustice made against the young peasant who was condemned by her neighboring villagers after serving as the prostitute and the spy in the back of the opponent. In the 1940s, Ding Ling was scarified in Yenan for her story *When I was in Xia village*.

It is necessary to mention that it was the system of the Communist party of those times and, as we know, it had its own ideology and views on literature and art. After Ding Ling's integration into communist party, she continued to write and perform disputable works. One of them was *When I was in Xia village*. This history showed the backwardness of masses in Yenan operated by communists instead of the idea of a positive picture of the peasant, and thus violated the decree issued by the Party to create an integrated front with peasants.

Despite this fact, Ding Ling made big efforts to accept the objective style of the writing demanded by the Party in the story. In my opinion, Ding Ling, actually, did not want to criticize over the literature she had been working on for a long time. The criticism was rather a role of communists, its companions and party members. Ding Ling was the person who had independent character and independent ideas of art, thus, she was some kind of contradiction to the ideology of the Party.

So, what was the story about? *When I was in Xia village* represents a life story of the country girl and her friendship with the storyteller. In this novel, the storyteller is the official of communistic army representing the authority of culture, and she goes to Xia village for recovering. There she

meets the rural girl with the name of Zhenzhen with whom she develops a friendship. Raped and stolen by Japanese army during the attack on the village, Zhenzhen have become the secret agent for the communistic government, collecting Japanese military information and transferring it to the Communists. When she comes home after the absence for one year with an illness that is sexually transmitted, people in her community welcomed her with contempt and hostility. However, Zhenzhen appears as the true heroine despite all the obstacles. She stoically had taken out the restrictions of her family and romantic love. Finally, she decides to disobey the wishes of the family of marrying her former beloved man and leaves to look for an absolute recovery from her illness and for education. On a monologue of the decision of Zhenzhen, the comment of the storyteller was like this, "I was struck. Something new comes from her" ("When I was in Xia village 315).

The girl by the name of Zhenzhen, who as it was known, provocatively rejected the arranged marriage, after the Japanese intruded in her village and raped her. To revenge herself, Zhenzhen secretly subscribes for communistic anti-aggressor mission which demands her spying for Japanese army, serving as the prostitute. When the history reveals, Zhenzhen came back from front lines to heal her disease which she had gained, "serving" to Japan and, to that degree, China. This situation, however, causes more contempt, than sympathy of her neighboring villagers.

Zhenzhen's rape embodies the fear which any woman in China could have been put through the wartime; her task as the prostitute spy illustrates full patriotism. But Ding Ling has her villagers mainly unaware of the mission, so they think of her differently. For these villagers, the girl such as Zhenzhen who threw down a challenge to the arranged marriage and then did not protect her virginity is already enough disgusting. In addition, Zhenzhen suffers obediently; her venereal disease became a physical symbol of her patriotic spirit and her unjustified shame.

Feministic critics claimed strongly that Zhenzhen's history indicates as much cruelty of Japanese aggressors as roughness of the Chinese forces of defense. Zhenzhen's history is based on the paradox that she can receive self-respect only through deliberate self-energy. For its patriotic

contribution, she was rewarded by the most offensive of diseases. It can be added one more point. Zhenzhen joins confidential mission, allegedly, at the requirement of the Communistic integrated front. In case if the group of Chinese would be revealed, at first, her own body had to be taken and destroyed by enemies.

But more surprising fact is that besides all physical illness which torments her and makes her suffer, Zhenzhen is shown in the story as quite perfectly looking person. The storyteller expressed, "There was no symptom directed outside of her illness. Her complexion had been ruddy. Her voice had been clear. She didn't show prohibition or roughness signs. She did not exaggerate. She made an impression like she never had complaints or sad thoughts." Zhenzhen seemed to be untouched by her painful experience. Her ideological obligation was stronger than her still hidden physical illness. It is interesting, whether it is possible to get Ding Ling's story at face value. Zhenzhen's natural, healthy type is eventually, a nice cover hiding a body which quickly worsens. The contrast between how Zhenzhen's body looks and how it feels, causes allegorical reading; it is symptomatic because of reality or realism which turns against itself. Also, it can indicate a dilemma which surrounded Ding Ling as the writer in "the liberated area."

The year of 1942 notes a turning point both in nationalist, and in communistic versions of modern Chinese history of literature. In reply to more and more persistent provisions among writers in "liberating area," Mao gave a series of talks which ordered a format of communistic literature within the next four decades. It was much written about the main status of talks of Mao as well as their harmful consequences. Two things draw our attention at present. First, as the appeal to justice extended to become a national campaign, debate about crime and punishment entered more tendentious stage. For communistic writers, two wars were waged at the same time, the war against the national enemy, Japanese, and the war against the class enemy, a nationalist regime. The crippled bodies and incomplete families became regular subjects of that time but they were considered as a symbol of China that was torn apart by external and internal wounds.

As far as leftist literature was mentioned, there was a decisive internal turn, as writers reached agreement with new definition of violence. Mao and his group recognized the suffering of Chinese people, but argued that to do justice to all the insulted, they first had to submit individual subjectivity.

The changing form of national, international, and deliberate causes resulting in a significant reform in the approach of justice and violence.

The story of Ding Ling *When I was in Xia village* is well-known. For Ding Ling to write such historical work, meant to point to evil powers of reality: nationalist mode, feudal forces, class enemies and Japanese aggressors. But as the story develops, it cannot celebrate the power of the justice presented by the Party, without considering its recently installed system of coercion and discipline. The "crime" of Zhenzhen was to be a girl with a free soul, opposing to the prepared marriage. Such disobedience to the traditional norms and laws is necessary to be considered as an advantage in the new society; this advantage, however, is rewarded and punished at the same time later. Zhenzhen is convinced to serve for her party and the country, owing to the fact that she was already raped by the Japanese and belittled by her neighboring villagers. Later, she declares that she has made so of her own good will, and that she does feel neither hatred, nor regret. Zhenzhen's full submission shows to the Party the revolutionary eagerness equivalent to religionism, her "healthy look" is a questionable sign of her worsening opportunity to judge.

Predictably the history has a bright, sample of termination. Zhenzhen would go to another city, apparently Yan'an, for treatment and restoration. But with all the disgraceful past, how will the raped woman and the Japanese army prostitute, Zhenzhen, consider fairly the Party shots with puritan temper? Knowing that "illness" and "restoration" are characteristics for the Chinese communistic literary and political conversation, everyone asks a question, whether Zhenzhen's illness is curable, even in medical terms. Everyone remembers how the story begins with structure in which Ding Ling sends down the storyteller to Xia village for her "rehabilitation" because of turmoil of the department

of policy. Even if she could be healed from the physical illness, she would spend other part of her life exposed to a treatment of a political illness and rehabilitation.

When I was in Xia Village, appears a communistic retelling of the Christian and Buddhist menology while it contains frightening implication concerning full value and disposability of a female under a new regime, the same as in times of the old. In this point, violence and justice measurement in modern Chinese literature was affected by the woman - the author. Zhenzhen's case shows the emergence of the confused technology of violence which hurts its victim, only to win a sincere support of the victim. Inventing the story like that, Ding Ling shows that she will not be as naive as Zhenzhen. Actually, thanks to the publications such as, *When I was in Xia Village*, Mao suggested the literary strategy of 1942, accompanied by the first movement. For the following several years Ding Ling, together with some other frank supporting authors, would disappear from a scene for "rehabilitation". Considering nostalgic mood of the story, it appears both nostalgic situation and ominous prospect, pointing to the end of age of innocence.

As it could be noticed according to the maintenance of history, Ding Ling writes roles of women in its hard times and their inconvenient destiny in its circumstances. Ding Ling's experience in Yanan shows that women - authors were incapable to remain "released" within patriarchal structure of the Communist party.

Works cited

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