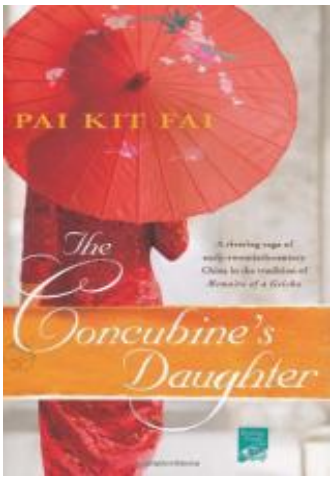
The Concubine's Daughter

by Pai Kit Fai



About the Book

Take a journey back to early 20th century China in **The Concubine?s Daughter**. Just as Lisa See captivated readers with **Snow Flower and the Secret Fan**, **The Concubine?s Daughter** will leave you mesmerized with its passionate tale of love and courage.

From remote mountain refuges to Hong Kong on the eve of World War II, this adventurous tale spanning two generations reveals an amazing cultural journey of a mother and daughter as sweeping changes unfold in 20th century China.

The Concubine?s Daughter is destined to be a reading group favorite, so don?t miss the extensive bonus content in the back of the book.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss the similarities and the differences between Li-Xia and her daughter, Siu-Sing. What matters most to each of them, and what does each do to achieve and preserve it?

2. Pai-Ling tells Li-Xia to ?gather your thousand pieces of gold wherever you may find them and protect them with all your strength.? What do you think this means? How do Li-Xia and Siu-Sing gather their ?pieces of gold? throughout the story?

3. What role does learning, from books and otherwise, play in the principal characters? lives?

4. Discuss the tradition of foot binding in Chinese culture. What are the deeper implications, aside from the obvious physical handicaps of the practice?

5. The Concubine?s Daughter is the story of three generations of women, all of whom are faced with challenges. How does the experience of one generation influence the next? What does the novel have to say about continuity with the past?

6. Myths and legends are recurring elements in the story, and link generations with a common thread. How are stories used to explain the violent forces that barrage the lives of Li-Xia and Siu-Sing? What role does spirituality play in the characters? lives?

7. Although society in the novel is explicitly dominated by men, in what ways are both major and minor women characters able to assert some sort of power over their destinies? In what ways are they powerless? Although the position of women has obviously changed since that time, can you see any similarities to the role of women in contemporary society?

8. What motivates some of the women in the story to help their fellow women, while others try to thwart them?

9. Discuss the roles of the various men in the story, and Ben Devereaux?s role in particular? What do you think Li-Xia finds most attractive about Ben? And how great a factor do you think his otherness plays in that attraction?

10. How does Siu-Sing?s childhood, which is idyllic in some ways, prepare her for a world beyond the mountains? How does it leave her vulnerable?

11. As young readers we are taught that every story has a ?moral.? Is there a moral to **The Concubine?s Daughter**?

12. The Concubine?s Daughter is set in an exotic world that often seems to date back many centuries instead of less than a hundred years ago. What seems most alien to you about this world, and what, if anything, reminds you of life in our own times?

Author Bio

Geoff Pike AKA Pai Kit Fai (born 17 October 1929) is a British-born, naturalized Australian writer.
Born in Tottenham Middlesex, he took an all-consuming interest in art and writing from the age of 3. His early years were spent in the German blitzkrieg of London and as an evacuee in the rural county of Essex. His letter to President Roosevelt thanking him for 'Bundles for Britain', was chosen from all 12 year-olds across Britain, and he won numerous awards for designing and headlining morale-building posters for Britain's war effort.

At 14 he entered the naval training-ship Indefatigable, and went to sea in 1945 aged 15. Temporarily blinded in the Persian Gulf from sunstroke in 1947, he jumped ship in Sydney and spent 2 years in the Australian Outback, breaking horses, felling trees and sailing aboard deep-sea trawlers. An adventurous youth made the works of Jack London, Ernest Hemmingway and Banjo Patterson essential reading; he began selling his cartoons and short stories to Country

newspapers in 1950.

After several more years at sea in the Caribbean, he joined the British army at the outbreak of war with Korea to become a Regimental Drill Sergeant, returning to Australia as an immigrant in 1954. Working his way through art-school, he became an illustrator and newspaper cartoonist: This led to two highly successful careers : the first in animated films as a pioneer of Australian animation: first to introduce animated educational films to Asia; and first to produce and direct US co-production with Paramount Pictures.

The second in International advertising, much of it establishing Western products and services in Asian markets : Over a period of 30 years, he held the position of Regional Creative Director for the world's leading Ad.-agencies, receiving every international Industry Award, plus the prestigious ' H. K. McCann Award' for creative excellence and outstanding leadership.
Whilst living in Hong Kong, he met and married the granddaughter of Sir Robert Kotewall, one of the British Colony's most famously prominent founders.

He began fulltime writing in 1973, winning the A& R Writers's Fellowship with a debut novel-trilogy, based on his early adventures. The Best-selling trilogy was chosen as Odham's Book of the Month Club in London from Pan Paperback, and Dymock's Book of the Month Club in Australia. In 1977 while resident in Manila, he was diagnosed with throat cancer: a keen student of Chinese martial arts and traditional Oriental medicine, he rejected surgery for the development of ancient methods of breath training.
Success in beating the disease and now a Master of Chi Kung, the challenge led to his internationally best-selling non-fiction book: Live Longer Love longer: The Power Of Ch'i , followed by three more in the series. Fascinated by a life lived in Asia and the history of Hong Kong and China, he published 'The Second Sunrise and Tiger Dawn, both novels set in the Far East. These were read by one of New York's most sought after Literary Agents, Albert Zuckerman, Founder of Writer's House on 5th Avenue.

Their work together produced a novel of the same genre, The Concubine's Daughter, published by St. Martin's Press in November 2009, and Red Lotus, published by Sphere, London in December 2009.

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