How do Men and Women Live Under a Patriarchy System in China?
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China’s History pertaining to Patriarchy

- For a long time, a traditional family for a woman might have meant having her feet bound at a young age, arranged marriage, and not being able to protest the family’s decision.
- Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* was translated into China in 1907. The book, along with the May Fourth Movement (1919), and the New Cultural Movement, was to inspire the country’s early feminist movement.

Importance of the Play *A Doll’s House*

- First being portrayed as a “doll – like” figure who obediently followed her husband, Nora eventually liberates herself and embraces the hope of living as an independent woman.

What Happens After Nora leaves Home?

- Nora’s “walk-away” from home gave her Chinese contemporaries the courage to enjoy their personal freedom (Yan, 2021)
- But once women walk out from the patriarchy system, what happens to them? Can they be completely liberated from its inconspicuous ideological constraints?

The Irony of Women’s “Liberation”

- Male intellectuals called for gender equality and women’s liberation. But at the same time, men are intimidated by the rise and empowerment of women.
- Man’s anxiety and insecurity further oppressed and victimized women.
- By portraying a “modern” couple who pursued gender equality through cohabitation, in ”Regrets for the Past”, Lu Xun, the modern novelist explores how woman can be further exploited in this so-called women’s “liberation” movement.

Two Perspectives in a Cohabitation Relationship

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<tr>
<th>Male perspective</th>
<th>Female perspective</th>
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<td>• As a public intellectual, man is responsible for liberating the woman.</td>
<td>• The search for personal and physical liberation exposes one to social and physical vulnerability</td>
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<td>• The definitions a man draws for the new, modern woman creates standards that are disagreeable to a woman</td>
<td>• Becomes a disgrace to the family</td>
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<td>• The circulation of man’s narrative can turn woman’s liberation into “men’s” liberation of woman and reinforce gender hierarchy.</td>
<td>• Lost of reputation</td>
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<td>• Lost of virginity</td>
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References