



## Bette Bao Lord

**Spring Moon**  
ISBN13: 9780060599751

**When *Spring Moon* was first published in 1981, it was described by the *New York Times* as filling a gaping hole in popular literature about China: How did you decide to chronicle the life of the Chinese upper class?**

I decided to write about the Chinese upper class because it reflects the traditions of an ancient culture and the trials of revolution best.

**How did you conjure up the world of China in the late nineteenth century? What kind of research did you do?**

To prepare myself for writing *Spring Moon*, I read about the history of Chinese, researched the life stories of my own clansmen, and had conversations with knowledgeable Chinese in and out of China. And through these resources, not only did I learn about nineteenth century China, I found myself in

the past.

**Were you inspired or influenced by any literary heroines in your creation of *Spring Moon*?**

I was inspired by my parents to write about our ancestral homeland but had no literary heroines in mind other than to try and realize a woman at once unique and universal.

***Spring Moon* dramatizes the significance of ancestor worship. What kind of roles do ancestors play in present-day China?**

Chinese ancestor worship has less in common with "worship" in the Western sense and more to do with the commandment of honouring one's forbearers. In doing so, one is less self-centered and alone, belongs to a larger community, is able to call upon deeper reserves of strength, and is subject to greater responsibilities.

***Spring Moon* was your first novel. How did your life change after its publication?**

I could call myself a writer; at least until the next time I faced the terrors of the blank page.

**Did you set out to write an epic? A political novel?**

I set out to write the story of The House of Chang — not a political novel, per se, but in the context of unprecedented historic change no family in any major city could escape the clutches of politics.

**What projects are you working on these days?**

For the last decade, I have primarily been serving on non-profit boards devoted to advancing human rights and democracy. I have also completed a screen-play of *The Middle Heart*. I await another story that I must tell.