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Cultural Ambivalence in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*

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By

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Letter of Recommendation

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled “Cultural Ambivalence in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*”
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CHAPTER ONE

Kingston and *The Woman Warrior*

Maxine Hong Kingston and *The Woman Warrior*

This research work explores a cultural ambivalence in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976). It revolves around ambivalence and hybridity resulted from a blend of two cultures, primitive Chinese and modern American. In the process of assimilation, they remain somewhere between two cultures, Chinese and American and Eastern and Western, respectively. When split between two cultures, major characters in Kingston's novel embody opposing worldviews. These contrasting views unfold real conditions of the Kingston family along with other Chinese immigrants lived during the 1930s and 1940s.

The study reveals Kingston's identity crisis. She critically examines ambivalence and dislocation. Being Chinese Americans means that one is torn between two worlds, without really being part of either. Kingston examines the conditions in which Chinese Americans are raised in the United States. Kingston narrative recounts transcultural experience, cultural ambivalence and cultural identity of Asian Americans. The economic, political, and social ostracisms that Chinese Americans faced formed the backdrop against which Kingston's family struggled to survive between the 1930s and the 1960s. Kingston's mother medical doctor in China, for an instance, was failed to do medical practice in the United States, and she was compelled to get a menial job in a laundry.

Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of Girlhood among Ghost* presents the central character's ambivalence between the original Chinese culture and new American culture because of her direct connection to her parents at home and her schooling in new American society. Moreover, differences she embodies epitomize

her transcultural experience in American society. Coming to a new country is not easy for anyone. Coming to the United States from China has been hard because the two cultures are so dissimilar. The former embodies modern Western worldviews while the latter represents traditional Eastern life.

The Woman Warrior is neither wholly a work of fiction nor an autobiography. It is a perfect blend of fantasy, folklore, childhood memories and family history. Kingston's work is revolutionary in the sense that it transcends genres. Her unique literary vision and style have established her as one of the most significant American writers in the late twentieth century. Simultaneously a historical, fictional, biographical, and imaginative work, *The Woman Warrior* can be examined from different theoretical perspectives. It has become a significant course in anthropology, women's studies, sociology, folklore, history and ethnic study. Since *The Woman Warrior* reflects Kingston's personal life in transcultural context, the following section briefly covers the novelist's personal background.

Kingston was born on October 27, 1940 in Stockton, California. She was the first of six America born children from the Chinese immigrants' parents, Chew Ying Lan Hong and Tom Hong. Her father, Tom left, China for America in 1924 but he was unable to find a job of a poet or calligrapher. Finally he took a job in a laundry service. Tom was swindled out of his share of the laundry. Kingston's mother, Ying Lan, joined her father in New York city in 1939. They moved to Stockton where Tom had been offered a job in a gambling house. Kingston was named after a blonde who was always lucky in gambling. By the age of nine, her progress in a new language enabled her to write poems in English. She had been rated a very bright student who won eleven scholarships that allowed her to attend the University of California at Berkeley. She began as Engineering major, but her interest in humanities eventually

switched her to English Literature. She received her B.A. degree in 1962 and her teaching certificate in 1965. She married Earl Kingston, a Berkeley graduate and an actor. Maxine Hong Kingston has written poems, novels, short stories on a wide range of subject as well as autobiographies.

The Woman Warrior won The National Book Critic's Circle Award and earned her name and fame by making her a literary celebrity. Her next critically hailed book *China Man* (1980), a sequel to *The Woman Warrior*, also received the National Critic's Circle Award. *China Men*, is also a form of biography, which describes the stories of her father's life in China as well as in the United States. The book features the lives of her male relatives including grand-fathers, uncles and brother and their difficulties and achievements in America- "Gold Mountain" (The Chinese colloquial term for America). The chapters range chronologically from the legendary past of "very great grandfathers" in China (*China Men*, 47) to the brother who returns safely from Vietnam (*China Men*, 304). *The Woman Warrior* and *China Men* were also supposed to be one book.

In 1989, she published her third mixed genre memoir, *Trip Master Monkey: His Fake Book*, a reminiscent of previous two books, set in San Francisco in 1960s, focuses on the life of Asian Americans. The protagonist of the novel, Wittman Ah Singh, in efforts to maintain his cultural and ethnic identity, exhibits an immigrant's struggle for living as being Chinese American in America.

Though she prefers autobiographical elements in her creation, her books are not mere the so one as specific genre but an autobiographical form that combines both fiction and nonfiction. So her writings are collage of genres. Story telling is one of the dominant tropes in her work. As a story teller the first person narrator in *The Woman Warrior* explores her identity formation in relation to her mother and other relatives.

The chapters integrate Kingston's lively experiences with series of talk stories that combine Chinese history, myths and beliefs her mother narrated to her.

Unlike other Asian American writers, Kingston herself experienced a tremendous dislocation because of growing up between old world (China) and new world (the United States) where she is alienated from both. The narrator as well as the writer of the novel reveals the problem of ambivalence due to mixing of two cultures. Complicating identity is the result of biculturalism and it is too tough to live in mixed identity and mixed cultures where, admixture culture is full of anxiety, pain, dissatisfaction and crisis. Kingston also describes her difficulty of living as a Chinese American because her subjectivity is precariously situated in the margins of both mainstreams American society and emigrants' Chinese culture. She is guilty of feminists as seen in the cases of the No Name Woman, Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid who were silenced in Chinese American families. In terms of American culture Kingston is guilty of 'ethnic otherness.'

The Woman Warrior is also rooted in the Chinese myth. In an interview with *New York Times*, Kingston remarks: "I keep the old Chinese myths alive ... by telling them in a new American way" (Pfaff 26). And speaking with Arturo Islas about Chinese folk material, Kingston suggests that "myths need to be changed and integrated... into the Chinese American's life" (14). As for her techniques of representation, Kingston records that, with certain characters, she "ended up writing about them from a distance, and they become mythic... past generations becomes mythology... their form is myth" (Thompson 8). Kingston has used Chinese myth in her novel.

The Woman Warrior is divided into five chronological segments of uneven length. Each of the chapter is bipolar, constructed around both a 'talking story' told to

the author by her mother and the incidents of everyday life in America. The first part, “No Name Woman”, begins with the first person narrator’s mother revealing the truth about their family in China. The line begins with the sentence “You must not tell anyone” (1). The narrator’s mother introduces the narrator’s paternal aunt whose disrepute has rendered her as unmentionable. This aunt becomes a family outcast for bearing an illegitimate child in the absence of her husband. She becomes alienated from family, society and nature. Finally, she drowns herself along with her new born baby in the family well after the villagers raided her house. At the same time, the mother attempts to suppress this story by forbidding the daughter to repeat it. However, through active imagination, the narrator gives this aunt life and immortality.

The second part of the novel, “White Tiger,” is an anthologized because of its fantastic portrayal of a female avenger. The story is about the legend of Chinese heroine, Fa Mu Lan, who is a woman warrior and leads her people to victory in battle. Like Fa Mu Lan, the first person narrator imagines herself leaving home at seven years of age and become a great warrior, triumphantly returning to her home to save the people.

The third part, “Shaman”, describes the narrator’s mother, Brave Orchid, who is a medical doctor in China. A trained medical doctor in China fails to find work in the United States except menial labors in tomato field and canneries. She has never hung up her own clothes in China but in America, she has to work in laundry from 6:30 in the morning until midnight. It describes the complicated identity of Brave Orchid. She finds American culture difficult to decipher. She was born, raised, and educated in China. She hardly adjusts herself in the United States but she never assimilates totally into the mainstream American culture. Even in America, she likes to practice Chinese culture rather than American. She is in her disillusionment, Brave

Orchid embodies Chinese emigrants, who fiercely guard the customs and traditions of their people. For her, the United Nations continues to be a mystery and an alien culture inhabited by strange people. Orchid considers those strangers as ghost because Americans have no definable identities.

Similarly, the fourth part, “At the Western Palace”, describes the narrator’s maternal aunt named Moon Orchid. A typical representative of Chinese society, Moon Orchid cannot assimilate into the American society despite her rigorous endeavors. She finds difficult in confronting her husband who is living a version of the American dream as a wealthy neurosurgeon. He has married a new American wife. With the manipulation of Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid is reaches to America to find her lost husband and claim her title of the first wife. At her encounter with her husband, he rejects her, scold her for disrupting his life and career. Moon Orchid’s old Chinese life based on an illusion of changeless stability is shattered where she has to struggle a lot but in the struggle she is defeated. She loses her husband, her family identity and eventually her mind. Finally, she is sent to mental asylum, where she dies. It is ironic that a neurosurgeon’s wife dies in a lunatic asylum.

The fifth part of the novel, “A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe”, focuses on the narrator’s growth into a creatively an assertive Asian American womanhood in California. In doing so, the narrator draws parallels between her life and the legendry experience of one of the Chinese woman poets, Ts’ai Yen, who was abducted by a nomadic tribe. She had two children with barbarian chieftain, and later was ransomed back to China. Her powerful poem reveals her experience of family, love, and life in the West away from China. In the same fashion, Kingston relates the myths and experience of her youth in the American West to those of her family and ancestors in East Asia. For Kingston, T’sai Yen is an emblem of the artist par excellence, whose

poetic power is capable of transforming a weapon, a whistling arrow, into a musical instrument. The chapters integrate Kingston's lively experiences with a series of talk stories that combine Chinese history, myth, and belief her mom shares with her.

The first two episodes of *The Woman Warrior*, "No Name Woman" and "White Tiger", describe the two models of identity, No Name Woman and Fa Mu Lan respectively constructed by Kingston from hearsay and legend. Similarly, the next two episodes of the book, "Shaman" and "At the Western Palace", contrast two role models from real life, Kingston's strong willed mother (Brave Orchid) and irresolute aunt (Moon Orchid). Both women came to California in search of their husbands, who had been lured Westward by the dream of success and prosperity.

An ambivalence rooted in different characters results from the blend of identity, culture and nation, where they become culturally dislocated. The narrator of the novel is virtually homeless both in China and America. She is not of Brave Orchid's world and she fits imperfectly into the country of her birth. She appears somewhere in between space less space where she seeks a greater independence and self respect which both cultures deny. She is stranger to both countries.

Kingston is nostalgic to her Chinese culture. She begins writing about an aunt back in China, whose name the family almost tries to forget. Kingston reiterates, "My aunt haunts me --- I alone devote pages of papers to her --- I don't think she always means me well. I am not telling her and her spite suicide drawing herself in drinking water" (16). These lines have nostalgic tone especially to the writer's Chinese culture. Kingston places her in a liminal position. Kingston writes in cross cultural context and manages dovetail in both gender and cultural categories. In *The Woman Warrior*, her concern for a gender ethnicity is evident in the way the narrative is built up in the fabric of culture and gender. In this context, the Chinese mythic talk stories are

brought in the line with modern American reasoned objectivity allowing her to mix fact and fiction, and comments on both the Chinese and American cultures, and thus, leading to the final reconciliation.

For Asian Americans, the bicultural condition is a crucial issue in the construction of identity. Biculturalism is a fact of life for America's immigrant population and their descendants. As a daughter of a Chinese family living in California, the narrator imbues with the misogynist legacy of her ancestry, a legacy that reaches back to traditional China but still echoes in her Chinese American environment. She is neither American nor any Chinese respiration is found in her. She meditates between her parents' ancestral Chinese culture, and the culture to which she has been born. Kingston is culturally dislocated in America where she neither turns back to China nor adjusts completely in America. She is in dilemma and cannot choose either one. Connected to the Chinese ancestry, Kingston experiences homelessness, ambivalence and alienation in the United States where she is born and brought up. Insignificant in foreign land, she has to live in a fragmented, alienated, estranged and disrupted personality.

Kingston feels as different from her American classmate as she does from her own relatives. Kingston's childhood and young adult years are marked by a tremendous dislocation because of growing up between the old world China and the new of the United States. Another difficulty in being Chinese American is that one's cultural heritage is always second-hand, filtered through the lens or talk stories of someone else.

The Woman Warrior is a highly inventive, historically embedded novel. A central motif in *The Woman Warrior* involves the author's attempt to create an authentic self apart. In this novel, the technique of different narrators from multiple

points of view is used to tell the story of a woman's struggle with identity as a minority in American culture. It is a mythopoeia synthesis of Asian American cultures, producing a unique identity and imagination that throws an Asian slant of light on American realities. Kingston uses women's stories to explore her own cultural history. As a first-generation Chinese American, she struggles to reconcile her Chinese cultural heritage with her emerging sense of herself as an American.

The book is also post-modern text, in that it is collage-like in form and it complicates the idea of an authentic self. With reference to *The Woman Warrior*, *New York Times* writes “a poem turned into a sword” (Kwong 98) jumps from a forgotten aunt's suicide to a suspended reality where the author is Fa Mu Lan, a famous warrior from an epic Chinese poem. It then dives into her mother's battle against ghosts, and plunges on into the tale of another aunt's sanctuary in an insane asylum (Kwong 98).

Kingston depicts the conflicting cultural messages she received as a daughter of Chinese immigrants in America. Kingston, however, interfaces the American and Chinese culture in *The Woman Warrior* by placing herself in the luminosity. She never announces that Chinese culture is superior to American or vice versa. Kingston explicitly portrays Chinese- American's ambivalence resulted from dislocation from both cultures.

Review of Literature

Since its publication in 1976, *The Woman Warrior* has been the subject of a single text study or as a part of a broader analysis of Kingston's writings. Humorous critical writings treat this work as an anthropological, cultural and historical text. Critics have interpreted the novel from different perspectives. Kingston's main venture is an attempt to show the problem of identity crisis because of an immigrant's upbringing into two cultures. The novel is largely based on Kingston's personal

experience of being in the middle of two cultures, American and Chinese.

Kingston's success, however, earned her the enmity of some Asian American critics. The most fundamental objection to *The Woman Warrior* is its generic status. Some Asian American critics question whether it is valid to call the book an autobiography when there are so many fictional elements included in her personal experiences. Moreover, they critique Kingston for presenting her personal experiences as "representative" of the Chinese American community. The real problem, however, seems to rest on those readers who have misconceived the text. In her 1982 essay, "Cultural Mis-reading", Kingston herself laments the fact that many critics of the dominant culture have misread her and measured her against the stereotype of the exotic, inscrutable, mysterious Orient. Kingston's first two books belong to the postmodernist mixed-genre tradition. Her books are not autobiographies as a specific genre but an "autobiographical form" that combines fiction and non-fiction.

Leslie Rabine's essay in *signs* explores Kingston's double ambivalence to her parents' Chinese culture and to American culture. As Kingston is born in America, she cannot be called as complete Chinese and as her parents are Chinese she cannot be called as complete American. So, she is neither American nor Chinese. She is stranger to both which describes her ambivalence situation. At once she is in the middle of both cultures.

Michael Omi and Howard Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States from 1960s to the 1980s*, examine *The Woman Warrior* from the perspective of socio-political origin and racial ideology. analysis of the socio political origins of racial ideology, as the text negotiating the constitutions of Chinese American identity which describes the difficulties faced by Asian American in the United States in order to construct their identity, where they are ignored by whites. Moreover, it unfolds the

difficulties faced by the Asian American s regarding their job and how they are forced to do the lower class job.

In the essay “Thick description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” Clifford Geertz remarks that human beings are “suspended in webs of significance” that they themselves have spun (5). It means to describe that Kingston is caught in the mysterious webs of the Chinese cultural tradition that have structured the reality of her mother and her aunts. In creating her own identity, she questions these “webs of significance” and teases out her own meaning. In differentiating between what is Chinese and what is her own family she comes to her own understanding of the reality of the “village” life. What her mother’s generation accepts as tradition can be termed as repulsive practices.

Roberta Rubenstein’s *Bridging Two Cultures* and Elaine Kim’s *Vision and Fierce Dreams* analyze *The Woman Warrior* as reconciling the immigrants and Chinese Kingston and her parents. As an American born daughter of immigrants, the narrator has no access to Chinese realities. She is in the middle of two worlds as well as cultures. She could neither be complete Chinese nor be complete American. She is completely torn in between two cultures. She has not got one proper identity.

David Leiwei Li’s essay “Naming of the Chinese American” locates *The Woman Warrior* to its cross cultural context. Focusing on the primacy of names and pronouns in the book, Li provides the Chinese cultural information necessary to balance reading of this Chinese American text.

Margaret Miller has shown in her essay “Thread of Identity in Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*,” Chinese women, like Chinese men, were expected to function in a familial role. Both were expected to continue the family hierarchy, men as leaders who revere the past generations and look to future generations, women

as necessary, but subordinate links in this family hierarchy. The Western concept of the individual is foreign to cultures with such “communal traditions” (14). In fact, Miller sees Kingston’s task as a Chinese American autobiographer problematic in trying to turn a Chinese ‘We’ into Chinese American ‘I’ (17). The Chinese “We” indicates to the Chinese people’s collective unconscious whereas the American “I” embodies the Western individualism worldview.

As Kingston is a second generation American, *The Woman Warrior* is considered as an autobiography form about the difficulties and struggles of Kingston regarding her culture and identity. Along this line of argument, Deborah Homsher, approaches the work as “an autobiography of a second generation America,” a dramatic form that enacts the central problem of [Kingston’s] life, that she is not completely Chinese (95). For Homsher, Kingston was born and brought up in America she cannot be considered as complete Chinese but as her parents are Chinese she cannot be called as complete American.

Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* is a powerful piece of autobiography from a female and spiritual point of view. Kingston’s family originally emigrated from China to the United States. The book is powerful because it confronts many aspects of women’ lives which are repeated in different cultures, especially the male female relationship and attitudes to that relationship within community.

Woman, culture and the violence against them are vividly depicted in the novel. Feminist critics or theorists argue about the extent to which women share a common culture. *In Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf asserts, “As a woman I have no country... As a woman my country is the whole world” (166). This has a fine tone of a woman plight. If the sentiments are wholly true we would not find in women’s lives so much pain, confusion and conflict.

Shirley Geok – Lim about *The Woman Warrior* as:

The Woman Warrior ... seems characteristically American in its search for identity. It is a part biography, part history, part fantasy, part fiction, part myth and wholly multilayered, multivocal and organic. It draws its strength from Kingston's ability to embrace the wealth of narrative forms. (X)

Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* is a unique or random collection of mixed genre which describes the protagonist's search for identity where she is in the middle of two cultures. She is in the state of pendulum due to mixing of two cultures.

In this way, the critics have approached the texts in many ways. They have focused on different issues. Such perspectives and approaches are mostly reader oriented and the text-oriented but they have talked less about the issue this thesis is going to explore. This research work is designed to examine cultural ambivalence in Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* in the light of postcolonial theory.

This research explores the elements of cultural ambivalence in *The Woman Warrior* that affects the life of Chinese Americans in the United States. A gritty, yet dazzling portrayal of characters and their problem of identity crisis, dislocation, disillusionment, and alienation have been analyzed further. Visual mimicry and the usage of cultural commodities, the first and the easiest attempt of Americanization, will be focused in Kingston's work.

The tool of this research takes on Postcolonial theory with especial focus on cultural ambivalence as postulated by Homi K Bhabha, Leela Gandhi, Gayatri Spivak, Jack Chin, Judy Yung, and Ania Loomba. The term 'ambivalence' refers to an uncertainty or fluctuation, especially when caused by inability to make a choice or by a simultaneous desire to say or do two opposite or conflicting things. It also refers to

doubt, fluctuation or hesitation in which one cannot make one proper decision. It is a term that developed in psychoanalysis to describe a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite. Adapted into colonial discourse theory of Homi Bhabha, it describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizers and colonized. Ambivalence also means a simultaneous attraction towards and repulsion from an object, person or action.

Cultural ambivalence is a postcolonial issue or the main cause of ambivalence situation is due to the process of colonialism, which is resulted from a blend of two cultures. Colonization led not only the colonized to suffer but it cast its impact on other untouched countries too. Kingston's parents arrived in America for better opportunities which made Kingston to remain with a complete hybrid identity, an identity that is different from both America and China. Coming to new land they become hybrid figures because of mixing of two cultures and they remain in dilemma. They never completely belong to one particular culture which gives rise to ambivalence. Thus ambivalence is produced due to hybridity and dislocation.

In ambivalent situation, one will be in middle of two cultures. Cultural ambivalence is also related with identity. Infact, the identity of people is always embedded in the culture. Culture and identity crisis are the factors which make the dominated people or natives feel alienated and dislocated. Their originality has been lost because of the so called supreme or dominant culture during the period of colonization. Since they were physically, mentally and psychologically marginalized from their own land, culture and rights, they felt dislocated in their own space. In Kingston's narrative, the protagonist's ambivalence is rooted in her connection to Chinese culture and failure to totally accept the American culture. The Chinese

American society in The United States of America is predestined to have a third space between two cultures.

The Woman Warrior shows the Chinese American community, since the first day of their immigration to The United States, not being able to succeed in becoming American nor being able to keep their Chinese identity but creating a third space; they merely became Chinese American having the privilege of none. The novel is the relationship between Brave Orchid, as the representative of the first generation immigrants and Maxine, as the representative of the second generation. Kingston has created her parents' dreamy recollections of their childhood village, the mysterious they refuse to dispel, and her own second generation sense of rootlessness. Though *The Woman Warrior* is the product of 1976, Kingston has projected the theme of 1950s that is wide spread cultural stasis and neurosis. Considered an immigrant's story for a nation of immigrants, *The Woman Warrior* addresses the quest for identity of Chinese Americans.

This dissertation is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is introductory which partially reflects the whole thesis and its issues. Some critics are brought in this section to introduce the whole thesis. The second chapter discusses the theoretical frame to be applied while analyzing the novel. The cultural ambivalence is discussed from the perspectives of Bhabha, Geertz, Spivak, Chin, Yung, and Loomba and Gandhi. After this, *The Woman Warrior* will be examined from the perspective of cultural ambivalence in the third chapter of this thesis with the citation or illustration from the text. The last chapter concludes with the proof that the Chinese American suffers from the problems of cultural ambivalence because of hybrid identity.

CHAPTER TWO

Culture and Ambivalence

Culture and Colonialism

Culture, being a short term, bears a broad area of society. It embodies customs and beliefs, art ways of life and social organizations of a particular country or a group. Besides, culture is the rope that ties various people in a single bond, which gives the feeling of being. It is also believed about a particular thing that people in different areas share same norms and values. Culture refers to characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Culture is shared behaviour. Today, in the United States as in other countries populated largely by immigrants, the culture is influenced by many groups of people that now make up the country. In other sense, we can also say that culture is a form of human identification. Since ancient era, culture made man civilized creature. People at first were barbaric. Later, different cultures taught them about civilization. Culture is a way to be civilized. Culture includes all the things around us like norms, values, behaviors, knowledge, belief, etc.

Famous anthropologist E.B. Tyler defines culture as: "... culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (qtd in Michell 45). In this sense, culture is an umbrella term to know a person and his/her behaviour. The acquisition of a person from his/ her birth to death is culture. Culture shapes human mind and his or her attitudes while he or she lives in society.

There are seven or eight major civilizations in this world. Every civilization has its own history. And culture varies because each society or civilization has its own history, religion, customs, behaviour, norms and values. Thus, literature as a

reflection of contemporary society and its culture also varies. One person who is brought up in one society cannot easily fit in another society; he or she may feel dislocated and alienated. The concept of culture has to do something with identity. Thus, culture belongs to a broader human consciousness that is both developed and shaped by society and its history.

For Bhabha, culture is a strategy of survival. He believes, “Postcolonial criticism focuses us to engage with culture as an uneven incomplete production of meaning and values ... produced in the act of social survival” (438). Defining the idea of culture, he further describes:

Culture is a strategy of survival in both transnational and translation. It is transnational because of contemporary post histories of culture displacement it is a translational because such spatial histories of displacement ... make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by culture, a rather complex issue. (438)

The transnational dimensions of cultural transformation, immigration, diasporas, displacement and reaction, makes the process of cultural translation. Everything survives upon culture which is a whole way of life. Because of the translation of cultures, the originality of one culture is lost resulting in a hybrid culture.

Everywhere, hybrid culture is different from the original culture. In this situation, the native people feel cultural loss. While in the process of colonization, the people with super power, such as the United States might impose their own culture, norms and values upon natives. Thus, natives feel their cultural loss. They are unwillingly made culturally dislocated in their own land.

Culture is the fact that makes different types, classes, and colored people in single and homely feeling that is nationalisms. Culture makes new unity to one

another and at the same time it creates chaos and quarrel between two different cultural groups. Huntington correlates cultures with people's identities:

In the post cold war the most distinction among people are not ideological, political or economic. They are cultural people and nations are attempting to answer the most basic question human can face: Who are we? ... People define themselves in the terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs and institutions. They identify with cultural groups: tribes, ethnic groups, religious, communities and nations and at the broadest level civilization We know who we are only when we know who we are not. (21)

For Huntington, people are integrating together through culture. That is why he categorizes civilization in seven or eight different groups which are determined by cultural phenomenon. After World War II (1939- 45) the colonial power faded in its ideological, political military and economical field but the cultural root was expanding in the line with nationalism which could be possible only through culture. Therefore, culture is the prominent factor to identify one's identity.

Based on cultural group, one group claims its superiority over another. Huntington suggests that culture is the major factor for the third world war. Without brotherhood, people develop enmities among themselves. Countries with different countries are falling apart in small territories having different nationalities.

Culture and identity are interrelated phenomena. Chris Baker states:

Identity is hotly debated when it is in crisis. Globalization provided the context for just such a crisis since it has increased the range of source and resources established during colonialism and its aftermath, combined with more recent acceleration of globalization particularly of

electron communication, have enabled and increased cultural juxtaposing, misting and mixing. (200)

The issue of identity is very much affected by the high speech of globalization and mass media, which mix different cultures in the same place. It can be said that identities are sketched in various sectors because of the emergence of new theories in recent era. Furthermore, identities are influenced by different factors including economic, political, and cultural, as colonization and immigration go on. As a result, no fixed and constant identities will remain for a long time, which causes cultural hybridity and one of the vicious consequences of ambivalent relationship between colonizers and colonized or between dominant and marginal group.

The term colonialism is significant in defining the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the last 400 years. Although many earlier civilizations had colonies, a number of crucial factors entered into the construction of the Post Renaissance practices of imperialism. Colonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world however, everywhere it locked the original inhabitants and the new comers into the most complex and traumatic relationship in human history. Colonialism is the policy and practice of power in extending control over weaker people or areas. Hence it evacuates the word 'colonialism' of any implication of an encounter between people or of conquest and domination. There is no hint that the 'new locality' may not be so 'new' and that the process of 'forming a community' might be somewhat unfair. Colonialism involves the consolidation of imperial power, and is manifested in the settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied land.

Colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land

and goods against their will. It is also said that colonialism was the midwife that assisted at the birth of European Capitalism or that without colonial expansion the transition to capitalism could not have taken place in Europe. Western colonial expansion began during the 15th century when Spanish and Portuguese explorers conquered "new" lands in the West Indies and the Americas. It continued for over 400 years, and ended with the start of the First World War (1914-18). By that time western powers, such as, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Portugal and Spain spurred on by their competitive desire to acquire new lands and resources, had colonized the whole of Africa and the areas that we know today as the Americas, Oceania, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and many parts of Asia.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), likewise, embarked on an expansionist period that took place during the first half of the 20th century. By mid-century, due to lands gained through an aggressive expansionist policy and through post-World War II treaties, the Soviet Empire gained control of all of Russia and most of Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

Ania Loomba in *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* points out the problem in colonialism: "colonialism intensifies patriarchal oppression often because native men increasingly disenfranchised and excluded from public sphere, it becomes more tyrannical at home" (142). European colonialism often justified its civilizing mission by claiming that it was rescuing native women from oppressive patriarchal domination: "The colonialist bourgeoisie had in fact deeply implanted the minds of colonized intellectuals that the essential qualities remain eternal in spite of the West of course. The native intellectuals accept the cogency of these ideas" (144).

In Elleke Boehmer's examination of the power relationship between the

colonizer and colonized “Colonialism dehumanized the colonizers as much as it brutalized the colonized. The relationship it produced was akin that in a family headed by a tyrannical husband and father who maintain authority by sheer terror” (149). The colonizers are hungry for power and material comfort for generating discourse.

It is significant that no society ever attained full freedom from the colonial system by the involuntary, disengagement of the colonial power until it was provoked by a considerable internal struggle for self determination or, most usually by extended and active violent opposition by the colonized. Benita Parry treats colonial as an ideological construct, “The colonial is the product of ideological machinery, the formation of its differentiated and incommensurable subjectivities is the effects of many determinants numerous interpellations and various social practices” (qtd in Mongia 85). The construction of ideology of late nineteenth- century imperialism is, the representation of the colonized is on the policies of racial discrimination and cultural exploitation. Colonialism erodes many matrilineal or women- friendly cultures and practices or intensified women’s subordination in colonized lands. Colonial relations were always heterogeneous and shifting.

The western colonization had made great impact upon people’s lives in former colonies. There was miserable condition of native people. They were under the pressure of Western military imperialism. All rights were over by colonial power and they imposed their norms and values upon natives. Natives were not given their rights. Instead they were thought to be animals by the invaders rulers. The imposition of power over native people made their racial and cultural identity fall into crisis. There was extension of colonial power through cultural activities. There was a conflict between the native culture of the colonized and the universal culture of the colonizers. But the so called universal culture of the colonizers did not adopt the

cultural features of the colonized because the colonizers regarded their culture as inferior culture. Thus colonialism inferiorized the native culture. There was internal domination of cultural groups or ideology by colonized groups. As a result the indigenous culture was demised.

The critique of colonialism can hardly be overestimated. For the representation of the colonial project of European bourgeoisie is a mission 'Europe reaches out'. Bill Ashcroft and Helen Tiffin assess the colonial control of natives as, "British colonial administrators, provoked by missionaries on the one hand and fears of native insubordination on the other discovered an ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control of the natives under the guise of a liberal education" (*The Empire Writes Back* 3). It has the tendency of convincing examples of Universalist mission with academic teaching as witness among the curricula of liberal education.

Though China was not direct political colony of England, but the world sentiment was colonized by the British. So China was indirectly colonized country. Colonization led not only the colonized to suffer but it casts its impact upon other untouched countries too. Due to this indirect colonization, many Chinese leave their homeland after America becomes free from colonization. As America becomes free from colonization, it needs many manpower for the development work as well as the cheap labors, where many Chinese reach for cheap labors. The original Chinese emigrants, mostly males, left China for several reasons including colonization. Deterioration in the Chinese standard of living, limited resources, an ever growing population and the devastating effects of the Opium War between British and China worked together to push Chinese from their homelands. Chinese immigrants in America were repeatedly beaten, robbed, and even hanged.

Postcolonialism and Cultural Ambivalence

Towards the second half of the 20th century, many formerly colonized countries began to be independent from the colonial domination. In the academia, a new kind of theory was developed to deal with the problems generated by European colonialism and its aftermath which has dealt mostly with the cultural contradiction that is known as postcolonial theory. Postcolonialism deals with the effect of colonization on cultures and societies. As originally used by historians after the Second World War in terms of the post colonial state, 'postcolonial' had a clearly chronological meaning designating the post independence period.

Ever since, from the late 1970s, the term has been used by literary critics to discuss various cultural effects of colonization. The practice of postcolonial approach is based on diverse effects of European colonization. Postcolonial theory studies the ideological and cultural impact of Western colonization on countries across the world. Postcolonial world is the time of great diversity where a lot of changes take place in the society but those changes cannot be totally established as authorized one.

Postcolonial studies force us to confront the concept of culture beyond the canonization of the idea of aesthetics to engage with culture as an uneven in complete production of meaning and value often composed of commensurable demands and practices produced in the act of social survival. Bhabha observes the symbolic textuality of culture as:

Culture reaches out to create a symbolic textuality, to give the alienating everyday an aura of selfhood, a promise of pleasure. The transmission of culture of survival does not occur in the ordered Musee imaginaire of national cultures with their claims to the continuity of an authentic 'past' and a living 'present'. (152)

Culture as a strategy of survival is body transnational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement. It is considered a fraught accommodation of Third World migration to the west after the Second World War, or the traffic of economic and political refugees within and outside the Third World. Culture is transnational because such spatial histories of displacement make the questions of how culture signifies or what is signified by 'culture', a rather compiled issue. It becomes crucial to distinguish between the semblance and similitude of the symbols across diverse cultural experiences- literature, art, music, ritual, life, death- and the social specificity of each of these productions of meaning as they circulate within specific contextual transformation, migration, diasporas, displacement, ambivalence, relocation makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification.

A major element in the postcolonial agenda is to disestablish Eurocentric norms of literary and artistic values, and to expand the literary canon to include colonial and post colonial writers. People in the postcolonial world tried to re-establish their own cultural values as they were confused by the culture imposed upon them by colonizers. Those neglected and forgotten cultural values were again re-discovered. Moreover, the problem of identity emerges when people find themselves lost in dilemma. Such things happen when they are confused about the values of others. The postcolonial literary analysis seeks to understand the operations politically, socially, culturally and psychologically of colonialist and anti- colonialist ideologies. As Tyson states, Postcolonialisms analysis: "[Those] ideological forces that pressed the colonized to internalize the colonizer's values [as well as those] promoted the resistance of colonized people against their oppressors, a resistance of

colonized people against oppressors a resistance that is as old as the colonialism itself” (365).

Colonialism could continue as a relation of power in the subcontinent only on the condition that the colonizing bourgeoisie should fail to live up to its own universalizing project. The nature of the state it had created by sword made this historically necessary. Guha, et al, assert “the result was a society that no doubt changed under the impact of colonial capitalism but in which vast areas in the life and consciousness of the people escaped and kind of [bourgeois] hegemony” (8).

Postcolonial theory has dealt most significantly with cultural contradiction, ambiguities and ambivalence associated with the history of colonialism. Often it has been used to cover such a wide area that includes multiplicity of identities and subject positioning which results from displacements, immigration, and exiles. It also represents a multiplicity of experiences as described by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin, “Postcolonial theory involves discussion about experiences of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history” (2). It shows that the postcolonial theory is not constructed out of single experience. Rather it is mixed experience of all the items such as migration, slavery, resistance and displacement together.

Post-colonialism is a phenomenon that deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. It generally refers to the time of post-independent during the colonial period, the west imposed its own political as well as cultural power over the east. Though the east became independent from political perspective, culturally the east is still colonized. So, in this situation, the east cannot be free from the western impact, people of the east cannot totally resist and accept at the same time.

Some people attempted to resist western culture but could not be succeeded in this mission. Other kind of people also could not perfectly accept all of the western impact. They are at the state of neither fully acceptable nor rejection of western culture. As a result, the concept of mimicry and ambivalence looms in the people's psyche. In this case, John Mcleod states:

So, by revealing that the discourses of colonialism is forever embattle and split by ambivalence and mimicry always doomed to failure in its attempt to represent the colonized, Bhabha avoids the criticisms of Said's work by attending to the ways in which colonial discourses are problematized by the very people they claim to represent. (55)

The natives have no choice but to accept these new ways of life. The settlers' technology is more advanced and they could easily wipe out all natives who refuse to conform to the new culture. This is where the depiction of new culture begins. Natives stop practising their religion. In most cases, they convert to Christianity, mainly because it is forced onto them. In order to communicate with the colonizers, they start speaking the settlers' language. Soon they start losing their own.

Postcolonial period, which is also known as interregnum or the transitional period is a time of formation of group of statements. It states how a succession of events may, in the same order in which it is presented, become an object of discourse. It provides principle of its articulation over a chain of successive events. It is the time of flow where everything keeps on flowing according to movement and speed of time.

Colonialism has inculcated an inferiority complex into the colonized's psyche. It is very complex that urges the colonized ones to imitate colonizers' cultures and values. Postcolonial writers are conscious of political and mysterious power of language. Their works have engaged readers to have interest in complex cultural

narratives. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin state, “Language is fundamental size of struggle for postcolonial discourse because the colonial process itself begins in language” (283). The control over language by the imperial center remains the most potent instrument of cultural control.

Under the influence of colonial power during the 1950s and 1960s, most of the African, Latin American and Asian nations, once colonized by Europeans, emerged from the military colonization. The newly emerging nations tried to define themselves along the cultural lines as they were not still free from linguistic, economic and cultural forms of colonization. People in these nations were trying to remake and explore their cultural values as they were confused by the culture imposed upon them by the colonizers.

Postcolonial theory has attempted a reading of cultural histories throughout the previously colonized countries. At the same time, there is an immense influence of post-structural concept in language, race, gender, and classes. By such means, postcolonial theory has attempted to deconstruct the Eurocentric thought. Leela Gandhi investigates the dialectics between Marxism and Postmodernism:

Intellectual history of the postcolonial theory is marked by dialectic between Marxism on the one hand, and post structuralism, post modernism on the other. So this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of the postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the completing claims of nationalism and intellectualism, strategic essentialism and hybridity and dispersal, the politic of structure and politics of fragment. (5)

The postcoloniality incorporates the problem of representation in colonial writings under its subjects of study. The other issues that are constantly held in postcolonial

studies are the neocolonial domination, various versions of nationalism, problem of migration, hybridity and diasporas. Postcolonial theory refers to a multi-standard and cross-disciplinary intellectual movement that places cultural analysis in the context of social formation.

The theoretical postulation of postcolonialism is embedded with the subaltern. As the definition of the term subaltern is the principal contribution to Postcolonial Studies, by the philosopher and theoretician Gayatri Spivak about which she cautioned against assigning an over-broad connotation, that:

Subaltern is not just a classy word for “oppressed”, for other somebody who’s not getting a piece of the pie ... In Postcolonial terms, everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern — a space of difference. Now, who would say that’s just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It’s not subaltern ... Many people want to claim subalternity. They are the least interesting and the most dangerous. I mean, just by being a discriminated-against minority on the university campus; they don't need the word ‘subaltern’ ... They should see what the mechanics of the discrimination are. They’re within the hegemonic discourse, wanting a piece of the pie, and not being allowed, so let them speak, use the hegemonic discourse. They should not call themselves subaltern. (17)

Examining the colonial and postcolonial texts from the Marxist- feminist perspective in a deconstructive spirit, Spivak has described the 'negotiation of the postcolonial position' in terms of reversing, displacing and raising the apparatus of value- coding, a complex metaphor without an adequate reference that perverts its embedded context.

Spivak continues, "claiming catachresis from a space that one cannot want to inhabit, yet must criticize is then, the deconstructive predicament of the postcolonial" (*Post Structuralism* 225-28). As a mode of analysis, a postcolonial student attempts to revise the pedagogies that set up the relation of Third World and First World in a binary structure of opposition. Postcolonial studies also forces recognition of the more complex cultural and political spheres. The postcolonial intellectual attempts to elaborate a historical and literary project from the hybrid location of cultural value-the transnational also the translation.

Postcolonialism raises a voice against colonialism. It articulates pain and sufferings of the colonized during or after the colonial period. In it, there is the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Postcolonialism's major subject is how the colonized people were suppressed and oppressed by the colonizers. In other words, post colonial critics unfold the suffering, pain, suffocation, alienation, ambivalence, identity crisis of the colonized people. Postcolonial literature therefore, is deeply rooted in experiences of cultural exclusion and division under empire.

During the colonial period, blacks were dominated by the western power. No rights were given to blacks but they were considered slaves. During the colonized period, lots of steps had been processed to oppose the western pole but none resulted positive. Through colonization, there appeared numerous terms, such as dislocation, hybridity and cultural ambivalence etc which we have to explore in the novel.

Dislocation, in a simple term, is a lack of maintenance to fit in a particular place when one moves from a known to unknown location. The sense of in-betweenness creates the sense of unbelongingness to a particular culture, which creates a sense of dislocation. And on the literal level it is a feature of all invaded colonies, where indigenous or original cultures are often dislocated. They moved off from their

territories. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *Key Concept in Postcolonial Studies* reveal as follows:

The term is used to describe the experience of those who have willingly moved from the imperial 'home' to the colonial margin. But it affects all those who as a result of colonialism, have been placed in a marginal location that because of colonialism have been placed in a location that, because of colonial hegemonic practices, needs in a sense to be 'reinvented' in a language, in narrative and in myth. (73)

Dislocation is never ending structure in society. The society has no single articulation and organized principle. On the other hand, this is caused by transportation from one place to another place, which is a fundamental issue or by slavery system or imprisonment, by invasion and settlement, which is a result of willing or unwilling movement from known to unknown location. Dislocation furthermore in Heidegger's term means, 'unheimlich or unhimlichkeit'- literally 'unhousedness' or 'not- at- house- ness'. Someone, who had forsaken his original root and now realizes or his loss which haunts him. People often realize the fact of loss of their originality which makes them feel 'sense of dislocation'.

A dislocated structure is one whose centre is displaced and replaced by another, by plurality of power centers, and the societies have no center, no single articulating or organizing principle. It is constantly being centered or dislocated by force outside itself". Due to colonialism many people move from their own homeland to new country as a result they lost or dislocated in a new place where their own culture, religion, language become inferior and they suffer from in-betweenness.

Hybridity is borrowed from horticulture, which refers to cross- breeding of two species by grafting or cross pollination to form a third, hybrid species, which we

think of perfect and good matter. However, while coming to postcolonial context, it refers to cultural breed that is the result of bringing together of people and their culture from different groups and civilizations. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin remark “hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new trans cultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization” (118). Hybridity is formed by colonization when two cultural groups mix up together in the process of colonization. Because of long contact between two different cultures, there appears another culture that is hybrid culture.

Hybridity is more progressive term that occurs anytime and anywhere, if there presence two cultures. We can distinguish two different ways in which the term “Hybridity” is used contemporarily, especially in relation to culture. It also refers to the creation of new transcultural form within contact zone produced by colonialism. Due to colonialism people either forcibly or voluntarily leaves their homelands and migrates to foreign lands. In the foreign land, they begin to be influenced out of the foreign cultures. At the same time, they find some difficulties in the assimilation of the foreign culture. Then, they begin to create a distinctive culture in the new land that is neither completely of their own real culture nor of the foreign culture. So their identity becomes hybrid identity.

Hybridity has something to do with the traumatic colonial experience, since it is the ambivalent relationship of the colonizer and the colonized. As colonial settlers were displaced from their own point of origin, they felt the necessity of establishing new identity in an alien land. A binary relationship between the people of two cultures, races and languages emerge in colonial society that produces a hybrid or cross- cultural society. Thus, hybridity in postcolonial discourse has been used to mean cross- cultural exchanges.

Hybridity has frequently been used in post colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural exchange. In-between-ness also makes the hybridity exist in society. There is always a gap between two cultures and there two cultures create another hybrid culture. To support this view, Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin assert, “It is the in-between space that carries the burden and meaning of culture and this is what makes the notion of hybridity so important” (119). Hybridity is also used to describe the newly composed, mixed and contradictory identities resulting from immigration, exile and migrancy.

Robert Young suggests that the contribution of colonial discourse analysis, in which concept such as hybridity provides:

A significant framework for other work by emphasizing all perspectives on colonialism share and have to deal with a common discursive medium which was also that of colonialism itself ... colonial discourse analysis can therefore look at the wide variety of texts of colonialism as something more than mere documentation or ‘evidence’. (163)

Cultural hybridity subverts the narratives of colonial power and dominant cultures. The dominant culture is contaminated by the linguistic and racial differences of the natives.

The sense of dislocation and hybridism give rise to cultural ambivalence where one is in the middle of two cultures neither completely belong to neither one culture nor another. As people migrate from one land to another they become new in that land. The term ‘ambivalence’ refers to an uncertainty or fluctuation, especially when caused by inability to make a choice or by a simultaneous desire to say or to do two opposite or conflicting things. It also refers to doubt, fluctuation or hesitation in

which one cannot make one proper decision. Ambivalence also means as a simultaneous attraction towards and repulsion from an object, person or action. Ambivalence is generally defined as having feelings that are mixed or uncertain. More specifically, the term can refer to having both positive and negative feelings. It is the state of being drawn towards two opposite poles at the same time due to which one cannot offer pure judgment.

Ambivalence is a state of having simultaneous, conflicting feelings toward a person or thing. Stated another way, ambivalence is the experience of having thoughts and or emotions of both positive and negative valence toward someone or something. A common example of ambivalence is the feeling of both love and hate for a person. The term also refers to situations where “mixed feelings” of a more general sort are experienced, or where a person experiences uncertainty or indecisiveness concerning something. Ambivalence is experienced as psychologically unpleasant when the positive and negative aspects of a subject are both present in a person's mind at the same time. This state can lead to avoidance or procrastination, or to deliberate attempts to resolve the ambivalence. When the situation does not require a decision to be made, people experience less discomfort even when feeling ambivalent.

Ambivalence is the result of biculturalism where an individual is in middle of two cultures and cannot choose either one. Concerning the point about search of identity in bicultural situation Huntley states:

Complicating identity is the condition of biculturalism a double existence that produces in the descendants of immigrants of feeling of belonging to two distinct cultural traditions, yet not feeling completely comfortable in either one. Biculturalism is a fact of life for American immigrant population and their descendants. Many of whom must deal

with not only cultural conflicts, but also with the issue of race and ethnicity for Asian American who grows up 'hyphenated'. The bicultural condition is the construction of identity in that they must negotiate multiple cultural signs, systems, language and even communities they seek to stabilize a sense of self that embraces all aspects of their heritages. (106)

This quote represents the problem of the identity formation in mixed and multiple cultures. It also tells us that, it is almost impossible to construct identity in bicultural condition. In such condition one can neither belongs to one culture nor to another, they have to be in middle of both cultures which gives rise to ambivalence.

In psychoanalysis, the concept of ambivalence refers to an underlying emotional attitude in which the co-existing contradictory impulses (usually love and hate) derive from a common source and are thus held to be interdependent. Moreover, when the term is used in this psychoanalytic sense, it would not usually be expected that the person embodying ambivalence would actually feel both of the two contradictory emotions as such. With the exception of cases of obsessional neurosis, one or other of the conflicting sides is usually repressed. Thus, for example, an analysand's love for his father might be quite consciously experienced and openly expressed – while his 'hate' for the same object might be heavily repressed and only indirectly expressed, and thus only revealed in analysis. Another relevant distinction is that whereas the psychoanalytic notion of 'ambivalence' sees it as engendered by all neurotic conflict, a person's everyday 'mixed feelings' may easily be based on a quite realistic assessment of the imperfect nature of the thing being considered.

Cultural ambivalence is a postcolonial issue which is resulted out of the situation when two cultures blend. In such a situation, one will be in the middle of two

cultures and cannot choose either one. In colonial discourse, Bhabha reinforces the cultural ambivalence as “The complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizers and colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simply and completely opposed to colonizer” (12). Rather than assuming that some colonized subjects are ‘compliant’ and some ‘resistant’, ambivalence suggests that complicity and resistance exists in a fluctuating relation within the colonial subject. Ambivalence also characterizes the way in which colonial discourse relates to the colonized subject, for it may be both exploitative and nurturing, or represent itself as nurturing, at the same time.

Most importantly in Bhabha’s theory, however, ambivalence disrupts the clear cut authority of colonial domination because it disturbs the simple relationship between colonizers and colonized. Ambivalence is, therefore, an unwelcome aspect of colonial discourse for the colonizers. The problem of colonial discourse is that it wants to produce compliant subject who reproduce its assumptions, habits and values—that is, ‘mimic’ the colonizer. But instead it produces ambivalent subjects whose mimicry is never very far from mockery. As Mimicry is the art of mimicking somebody/something. And mimic is to copy somebody’s voice, gesture etc. in order to amuse people. Ambivalence describes this fluctuating relationship between mimicry and mockery, and ambivalence that is fundamentally unsettling to colonial dominance. In this respect, it is not necessarily disemboweling for the colonial subject; but rather can be seen to be ambi-valent or ‘two- powered’. The effect of this ambivalence a simultaneous attraction and repulsion is to produce a profound disturbance of the authority of colonial discourse.

Ambivalence, gives rise to controversial proposition in Bhabha’s theory. Since the colonial relationship is always ambivalent, it generates the seeds of its own

destruction. In Bhabha's argument, colonial discourse is compelled to be ambivalent because it never really wants colonial subjects to be exact replicas of the colonizers—this would be too threatening (Young 1997). For instance, he gives the example of Charles Grant, who, in 1772, desired to inculcate the Christian religion in India, but worried that this might make them “turbulent for liberty” (87). Grant's solution was to mix Christian doctrines with divisive caste practices to produce a partial reform that would induce an empty imitation of English manners. Bhabha suggests that inevitably because of its own downfall, it is compelled to create an ambivalent situation that will disrupt its assumption of monolithic power.

Bhabha explains the idea of ambivalence in the form of culture or culture itself from deconstructive standpoints. Derrida thought of text as a being of chains or chains of world-thinking and, it is therefore, every text is an addition to the prior text or *ur-text* (text in the history). In Bhabha's line of argument, said, the Saidean sense of culture and the Derridean sense of text, culture is not singular or does not make singular effect or cannot be developed of singular effect but it includes multifarious impressions of habits and practices of colonizers or men of power. The change in the system of culture that takes place after colonial period of any nation will always be ambivalent and hybridized. Hybridization of any culture creates ambivalent condition—a condition in which people feel their culture and habits belonging to ‘no one's land.’ Hybridity and ambivalence are different enough from each other. They are different in meanings and their implications. The one is the effect of the other. Ambivalence is integral to the features of hybridity. Cultural identity in Bhabha's sense is:

The ambivalence of the nation as a narrative strategy — and an apparatus of power — that it produces a continual slippage into

analogous, even metonymic, categories, like the people, minorities, or 'cultural difference' that continually overlap in the act of writing the nation. What is displayed in this displacement and repetition of terms is the nation as the measure of the liminality of cultural modernity.

(292)

It is the power of colonizer upon the colonized to make them mimic themselves, make them ambivalent and to create the native as a hybrid person with the involvement in both cultures. According to Bhabha, "Ambivalent ... generates the seeds of its own destruction" (13). In one sentence, hybridity results in ambivalence which leads to self destruction. For Bhabha, the notion of ambivalence is the concept of hybridity. For him all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that, he calls the 'Third Space of enunciation'. Bhabha further argues that cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent pace. According to him, the recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity may help us overcome the exoticism of cultural diversity in favor of the recognition of an empowering within which cultural difference may operate.

Robert Young has suggested that the theory of ambivalence is Bhabha's way of turning the tables on imperial discourse. The periphery, which is regarded as the borderline, the marginal, the unclassifiable, and the doubtful by the center, responds by constituting the center as an 'equivocal, indefinite, indeterminate ambivalence' (1995: 161). But this is not a simple reversal of a binary, for Bhabha shows that both colonizing and colonized subjects are implicated in the ambivalence of colonial discourse. The concept is related to hybridity because just as ambivalence decenters authority from its position of power. It is the so colonial context in which it finds itself dealing with which can be seen as a feature of its ambivalence. In this respect,

the very engagement of colonial discourse with those colonized cultures over which it has domination, inevitably leads to an ambivalence that disables its monolithic dominance.

Colonial authority, Bhabha suggests, undermines itself by not being able to replicate its own self perfectly. In one of his best known essays, 'Signs Taken for Wonders', he discusses the transmission of the Bible in colonial India and the way in which the book is hybridized in the process of being communicated to the natives. He concludes that the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference. (Bhabha 1994: 169)

Thus, the concept of ambivalence is related to hybridity. As people migrate from one country to another due to colonialism they began to settle in a new place. There they began to follow a new culture which is neither foreigners nor natives' and they themselves become hybrid figure in the middle of two cultures which create in betweenness. Because of in-betweenness they remain in dilemma or confusion not being able to decide which one to follow or which one to reject which creates an ambivalent situation.

CHAPTER THREE

Cultural Ambivalence in Different Characters

Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* deals with an encounter between Chinese and American culture which depicts the trial and tribulation of a Chinese American growing up in California. In the novel, Kingston, the narrator as well as writer of Chinese ancestry, communicates her feeling of displacement and confusion about who she is and to which the world she belongs. As, the daughter of Chinese parents who emigrated to California, Kingston finds herself in limbo. The encounter between the diametrically opposite East and West in terms of context of culture is constantly raised by Kingston from the perspective of the emigrants. *The Woman Warrior*, exhibits cultural ambivalence in search of one's identity through culture. Moreover, Kingston through this novel focuses on the ambivalence of parental and maternal conflicts in China town community, that of the seeking for subjectivities of Chinese Americans.

The Woman Warrior is an unconventional work that reconciles Eastern and Western conception of identity. She eschews chronological plot and standard nonfiction technique in her memoir, synthesizing ancient myth and imaginative biography to present kaleidoscopic vision of her characters. The protagonist of the novel, the child of Chinese immigrants living in California, struggles for her own cultural identity. As an American born daughter of stern Chinese immigrant, Kingston represents the anxiety that often results from clashes between different cultural sensibilities. It is also the story of a young Kingston trying to reconcile the Chinese culture she was raised in, and the American culture she is imbibed. To show the ambivalent situation there are some factors like immigration, diaspora colonialism, dislocation, hybridity, and so on.

Kingston, in effort to explore the cultural ambivalence, presents different characters of the novel. To address such situation of the novelist, Boehmer asserts, “The effect of Empire on colonized people and colonized response to invasion usually appear as mere traces in the writing of the time” (20). As the narrator as well as the protagonist of the novel, Kingston is the representative of second generation emigrants whose parents are Chinese born but she is America born Chinese. With conflicting signals coming from her ancestral Chinese culture and her American environment, Kingston’s dual heritage complicates her effort to construct a new adult identity.

As China was not direct colonized country but at that time of colonization, the whole world’s sentiment was colonized by the British. After America was free from colonization toward the last quarter of the 18th century, many Chinese rushed into America for better opportunities where they had to work as a cheap labor. Likewise, we can see the seed of colonialism existed in characters of *The Woman Warrior*. Due to colonialism, many people either forcibly or voluntarily left their homeland or moved into the new country. In the novel, the narrator’s father, grandfather and other male relatives move to America in search of better opportunities including, jobs and business. They refer to America as “Gold Mountain” which is described in novel. Brave Orchid mentions it, as: “Your father and his brother and your grandfather and his brother and your aunt’s new husband sailed for America the Gold Mountain” (1). Due to colonialism, failing crops and a poor domestic economy, many of the men from ancestral village in China were forced to leave their farms to in search of better jobs. They travel as far as America, which the Chinese nicknamed “Gold Mountain” because the original Chinese immigrants initially perceived it as a bountiful land where a good living could be made working in the gold-mining industry.

The Narrator

In *The Woman Warrior* the narrator- protagonist, experiences the ambivalent situation because of clash between two cultures where she can neither assimilate in one culture nor reject any. In the beginning of the novel, she is confused about her aunt, No Name Aunt, who has betrayed the family by giving birth to an illegitimate child in the absence of her husband. Later, she kills herself and her baby by drowning into the family well. Now, after many years, the narrator's mother tells her this story in order to warn her as she starts to menstruate. Though the narrator's families are living in America, they are following Chinese cultures and traditions where they seem to be strict in their culture.

After hearing the story about her No Name Aunt, the narrator wants to know information about her aunt from her mom but she could not ask her mom about aunt because of her warning. Here, the narrator is in ambivalent situation in that she can neither forget her aunt nor ask her mom about the aunt which is articulated, as: "If I want to learn what clothes my aunt wore whether flashy or ordinary, I would have to begin, "Remember father's drowned-in-the-well sister?" (6). so, she is in the state of confusion whether to ask her mom about the aunt or to stay quite. She is in confusion about her own aunt about why she is regarded as No Name Woman. She first thinks that No Name Woman must have been raped, since "Women in the old China did not choose" (6). She later tries to imagine a more sexually liberated No Name Woman, her own experiences interject, "Imagining her free with sex doesn't fit, though. I don't know any women like that, or men either. Unless I see her life branching into mine, she gives me no ancestral help" (4). She could not find any perfect reason why her aunt became pregnant. She invents her own fantasies about why her aunt gave in to her forbidden passions. In one such scenario, her aunt is a timid woman ordered into

submission by a rapist. In the other, her aunt harbors a slowly blossoming passion, attempting to attract a man's attention by carefully tending to her appearance. She is in the middle of both and unable to find any perfect reason.

On the one side, the narrator believes that her aunt decides to kill herself and her baby together in order to spare the child a life without family or purpose. On the other side, she believes that the baby was probably a girl, and as such would already have been considered practically useless to society. This is revealed in the novel, as: “Carrying the baby to the well shows loving. Otherwise abandon it. Turns its face into the mud. Mothers who love their children take them along. It was probably a girl; there is some hope of forgiveness for boys” (15). Here also she is in ambivalent situation regarding her aunt committing suicide alone with her baby.

The narrator's family has been living in America for a long time but they could not forget their real homeland i.e. China. Though the narrator's mother is physically in America, she is, mentally in China. Living in America, she wants to follow Chinese culture and tradition. She also wants her daughter to follow Chinese tradition and culture. So, she instructs her daughter: “Now you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don't humiliate us. You would not like to be forgotten as if you had never been born. The villagers are watchful” (5). Here, mother warns her daughter against adultery. She wants her daughter to follow strict sexuality of East though they are in West where there is open sexuality. She is very strict in her culture and traditions. It means though she has migrated geographically she has not migrated culturally. Here she can neither totally become Eastern nor Western thus she becomes hybrid identity.

The aunt story is resumed in a more objective vein and we are given an explanation of the motives of the avengers of a social code:

The frightened villagers who depend on one another to maintain the real went for my aunt to show her personal, physical representation of the break she had made in roundness... the villagers punished her for acting as if she could have private life secret and apart from them. (14)

While the remainder of the tale emphasizes the events which befall the persecuted woman, her thoughts and feelings. The narrative remains riddle with ambivalence in Kingston's recounting of her aunt's story. The narrator is in ambivalence regarding her aunt's pregnancy. On the one hand, she sympathizes her aunt and thinks that she might be the victim of someone else, which is stated as:

My aunt could not have been the lone romantic who gave up everything for sex. Women in the old China did not choose. Some man had commanded her to lie with him and be his secret evil. I wonder whether he masked himself when he joined the raid on her family. (6)

The narrator thinks that her aunt may be the victim of an evil man who has just used her body. As China is a typical country which is very strict in culture and traditions, the narrator thinks that her aunt cannot do such type of illegal activities.

But, on the other hand she shows anger towards her aunt and thinks that due to her Kingston has to participate in her punishment ... They want me to participate in her punishment and I have (16). The narrator is angry with her aunt that due to her illegal activities she has to get punishment without any mistake. Although she is physically away from her aunt but she feels that her aunt is always with her and due to her adultery, the narrator has to participate in a punishment.

The effect of dislocation can be seen in the dualism of the narrator where she is in ambivalence regarding China and America. She describes that the Chinese speak very loudly and for them only sick people have to whisper. They have very loud voice

every time they yelled from room to room even in phones or libraries which often irritates her. In comparison to the Chinese, the Americans speak very slowly and softly in a sweet and small voice so she expresses her desires to turn herself into American Feminine. Here, she takes the side of American. At the same time, she also asserts that the Chinese can remain silent which is articulated as:

...Chinese communication was loud, public. Only sick people had to whisper. But at the dinner table, where the family members came nearest one another, no one could talk, not the outcasts nor any eaters. Every word that falls from the mouth is a coin lost. Silently they gave and accepted food with both hands. (11)

On the one side she wants to turn herself into American feminine with the reason that they speak silently. On the other hand, she describes that not only Americans but also Chinese remain silent. As ambivalence describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion. The narrator is in the middle of both cultures. She rejects on one side and accepts on another side. She could neither turn into America nor into China. She is in the middle of two cultures. The narrator struggles a lot in defining her identity between the cultures she faces. She is confused. Her Chinese tradition tightens her really strong and American culture demands her to adapt.

The novel also depicts the typical Chinese tradition of treating girls as other's property where girls are raised just for others which Kingston states as:

Feeding girls is feeding cowbirds. I would thrash on the floor and scream so that I could not talk. I could not stop. What is the matter with her? I don't know. Bad, I guess. You know how girls are? There is no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls... When you raise girls you are raising girls' for strangers. (46)

The narrator hates such cultural practices of Chinese community which regards women secondary to man. Opposing these biases implicates to the narrator's American identity. So, she desires to turn herself as American feminine with no dates at all. And her desire is not deliberate but compulsion for she cannot digest the Chinese male standard to judge women.

The lines in the novel show her dissatisfaction as "...All the time I was having to turn myself as American feminine or no dates" (47). The narrator defying the marriage institution, deciding to remain unmarried, hammers the Chinese tradition and culture of treating of girls as other's property through the veil of marriage system. In contrast to her denial of Chinese cultural practice we can also see her attachment with Chinese culture which depicts her culturally ambivalent position.

The narrator remembers her mother's talk story about Fa Mu Lan, who is a Chinese mythical heroine taking her father's place in battle, leads her people to victory in the battle. The narrator compares herself with Fa Mu Lan. Such a conflicting view of love to and hatred of Chinese culture connote ambivalence. On the one side, she hates Chinese tradition of treating girls as others' property. On the other side, she compares herself with the Chinese mythical character. It means that she is confused and she shows both love and hatred towards Chinese culture. In comparing with the mythical heroine, she elevates herself to love for womanhood.

In this regard a question arises, if she wants to become an American feminine why does not she compare herself with American mythical character? Why does she compare herself with Chinese mythical character despite her hatred of China? It is so because of her upbringing in bicultural situation. She can neither completely turn to Chinese culture and practice nor to American ones. It describes the narrator's

ambivalent situation that she is in the middle of two cultures or nations, where she is not completely of one.

At first, the narrator resents to Chinese culture in traditional Chinese belief system that thinks raising girls is raising them for others, which is revealed as... There is no use wasting all the discipline on a girl. When you are raising girls, you are raising children for strangers (46). But at the same time she appreciates China by comparing herself with Chinese myth. Along Bhabha's argument line Bill Ashcroft et al, state, "Ambivalence describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizers and colonized" (12). The narrator is ambivalent in her steps. She is somehow guided by her own spiritual, ritual norms but she cannot decide whether to follow Chinese cultures, traditions, rituals or American ones.

To make the narrator ambivalent there is the role of colonizers as well as well as immigration. If her parents had not arrived in America, she would not have been so much confused. She would probably be living in China but at that time directly or indirectly the whole world was suffering from the problems of colonization. Colonization led not only the colonized suffer but it cast its impact on other untouched countries. Due to which not only the colonized countries but others also too had to suffer. The narrator's parents too being the victim of this type of indirect colonization arrived in America for better opportunities which makes the narrator remain with a complete hybrid identity; an identity that is different from both America as well as China.

In the novel, in addition to her refusal to matrimony, the narrator even behaves like a man where she burns food and refuses to clean dishes. She is repulsed by Chinese women who are entirely dependent on men, whose feet are symbolically

bound by their role as mother and wives about which the narrator illustrates as:

“Even now, unless I am happy, I burn the food when cook, I do not feed people. I let the dirty dishes rot. I eat at other people’s tables but won’t invite them to mine, where the dishes are rotting” (47-48). On the other side, she imagines herself as a feminine women getting married and having a baby. She will tell her mother-in-law that she will do farm work and house work. She also imagines promising her mother-in-law that she will give birth to son which is depicted as... “Wearing my black embroidered wedding coat, I knelt at my parents-in-law’s feet, as I would have done as a bride. I said “I will stay with you, doing farm work and house work, and giving you more sons” (45). This extract describes the ambivalence of the narrator where on the one side she rejects her duty of doing household work and her responsibility of typical Chinese woman. On the other side, she wishes to accompany the typical Chinese feminine characteristics as getting married, having children and performing all the household works. Doing so the novel depicts the dual state of the narrator where she is unable to stick with a single cultural position as she is guided by two forces at the same time. Outwardly, the narrator shows her desire to be American lady and wants to behave like a male but inwardly, she has strong desire of getting married. It happens because of her upbringing in two cultures.

The narrator is presented as complete hybrid figure because of her mix up with two cultures due to which she remains in ambivalent situation. Because of her long contact with two different cultures, there appears another culture that is hybrid culture. Although the narrator adopts the story of Fa Mu Lan into her own life, she too states the differences they have. Fa Mu Lan had a village to rescue while the narrator can not name any place as her village “I could not figure what was my village” (45) and she now decides that she belongs to both lands China and America. “To avenge

my family, I'd have to storm across China to take back our farm from the communist; I'd have to rage across The United States to take back the laundry in New York and the one in California" (49). Here, the narrator describes herself as complete hybrid figure because of mixing of two cultures at once.

In the novel, the narrator shows her rage towards her uncle who is a perfect example of masculinity who controlled female members in one way or the other. She also remembers that her uncle even does not let girls with him while roaming outside. Instead he takes all the male members with him except the narrator and her sister with the reason that they were females "...come children. Hurry up. Who wants to go out with Great- Uncle?" "I am coming. I am coming. Wait for me." When he heard girls' voices, he turned on us and roared "No girls!" (47). The Chinese were greatly influenced by gender system. The narrator is angry with her uncle, who did not allow girls to move outside the house. Because of his hatred of girls, she is not bereaved at the demise of her uncle. It is illustrated as; "at my great uncle's funeral I secretly tested out feeling glad that he was dead- the six foot bearish masculinity of him" (47). Even at the funeral procession too, she laughed instead of crying. Her hatred of the uncle epitomizes her contempt to the male domination in patriarchy.

The narrator's hatred of the male embodies her repulsion from the primitive Chinese tradition. At the same time, she pretends to be a male by wearing male armor and commanding men who fight under her. She even ties her hair up in order to be like men which is described as... "I put on my men's clothes and armor and tied my hair in a men's fashion." How beautiful you look, they said" (36). If the narrator really hates men, why does she want to be like the male? She can fight patriarchy and conquer men by being a female too but, she pretends herself as a male. She shows both her attraction and repulsion towards males. Being happy on the death of her

uncle symbolizes that she hates her uncle and all other men where as she pretends to be a male means still she supports masculinity and thinks that men can do better than women. She takes the males role though she hates a men which also show her ambivalence.

In the section “White Tiger” she skillfully builds up a geographic space of China though she has never been to China herself. For example, her depiction of the mountains and the clouds sound almost like painting she has seen them. Peaks that are ‘shaded in pencil’ and rocks that look like ‘charcoal rubbings’ (22). Though the narrator is physically far from her homeland, she is mentally near her homeland. So she creates her own imagination of China. She has hybrid identity due to mixture of both cultural practices where the identity is not fixed rather fragmented because her identity is neither completely American nor completely Chinese. So the narrator describes her identity crisis with the sense of “who am I?” and “where do I belong?”

As the narrator is upbrought in bicultural situation, she shows her ambivalent situation everywhere in the novel. She even does not want to listen any things about China when her mother talks about China and even she calls China as ghost because she has not been and seen China yet. China becomes invisible for her. She even does not want to go back to China. She describes: I did not want to go to China. “My parents would sell my sisters and me” (99). She is against the Chinese tradition and she even believes that the unwanted daughter could potentially be sold as a slave. So she does not want to be a slave. In order to protect herself, she does not want to go to China.

But on the other hand when Brave Orchid admits that “We have no more China to go home” (106). The narrator tells her mother: “We belong to the planet now, Mama. Does it make sense to you if we’re no longer attached to one piece of

land, we belong to planet? Wherever we happen to be standing, why those spot belongs to us as much as any other spot” (107). Here the narrator expresses her desire to go to China. Without China, they do not have anywhere to make permanent settlements. Now she feels that they do not have any fixed place to live. Though she does not want to return to China, still China is in her mind which she shows here in the above extract. At the same time, she wants to stay in America and wants to go back to China. She does not want to return China and she thinks that she does not have any home to stay outside China. It is her ambivalent situation that she cannot make one proper decision. She is in between two cultures and nations. Her identity is as pendulum in the middle of America and China.

Joint family is Eastern culture which Brave Orchid wants to follow in America which is a western country. She wants all her family members to stay together in America which is stated in the novel, as:

I want every one of you living here together. When you are all home, all six of you with your children, husbands and wives, there are twenty or thirty people in this house. Then I am happy and your father is happy. Whichever room I walk into overflows with my relatives, grandsons, Son in laws. I cannot turn around without touching somebody. That’s the way a house should be”. (107-8)

So, Brave Orchid begs her daughter to come and stay with them again. Though she is in America she wants to stay as in China so that she can teach her children about the importance of family and relationship. But the narrator denies her mother informs her that she does not want to come to stay with her mother because of Chinese culture and tradition prevailed at the home of Brave Orchid. The narrator often considers China as ghost which bothers her which is illustrated, as: “I don’t want to hear ghosts. I have

found some places in this country that are ghost free and I think I belong there” (108). Here the narrator asserts that she does not want to follow Chinese culture and tradition which she has not seen till now and she wants to run away from this Chinese culture and tradition. Despite her hatred of China, the narrator expresses her love toward it by comparing herself with her mom, Brave Orchid, who is an embodiment of Chinese culture.

The narrator compares herself with her mother. She proudly recognizes similarities between her mother and herself. She states: “I am really a dragon and she is a dragon both of us born in dragon years. I am practically a first daughter of a first daughter” (109). Now, the narrator proudly compares herself with her mother and she asserts that she is a dragon like her mother. A dragon is related to myth that refers to China. A time, she does not want to follow Chinese culture and tradition. Other times, she realizes that tradition. Following Chinese cultures and tradition is the portrait of cultural ambivalence. Although she wants to go away from Chinese culture, she cannot not go away mentally because of her own upbringing. The narrator’s contact with two cultures hinders her to take up a single cultural identity and thus, places her in ambivalence. Though the narrator is living in American culture, she has to listen narratives about China at home which makes her a hybrid.

In the story “A Song for Barbarian Reed Pipe”, the narrator finds difficult in speaking English. She needs to work hard to speak English. She speaks to no one at school. When she has to talk, she only whispers in stammered manner. Her silence perhaps occurs because of her feeling of inferiority as a Chinese immigrant whose first language is not English. The narrator is afraid to speak English loud because there are some words that she cannot pronounce perfectly, such as the words “I” and

“here” (166). This places her in between Chinese culture in the private sphere of home and American culture in the public sphere of school.

The narrator is the second generation immigrant from China to America. Since she is in the first grade, she goes to both American and Chinese schools. The Chinese school starts after American school, from 5:00 to 7:30 P.M. She finds lots of differences in the American school and the Chinese school. Chinese students in the Chinese school are noisy. Moreover, normal Chinese women have strong voices and they are bossy. It is illustrated: “After the American school we went to Chinese school where we chanted together, voices rising and falling, loud and soft, some boys shouting, everybody reading together, reciting together and not alone with one voice” (167). While in the American school, they have to whisper to make themselves as American-feminine. The narrator restates: “We American- Chinese girls had to whisper to make ourselves American feminine” (172). Because of this, there are some issues that she has been facing in the schools that affect her character. When she feels she belongs to nowhere in both schools, she is homeless. Going to both American and Chinese school at the same time makes the narrator a complete hybrid figure. Due to this, she neither turns totally neither to America nor to China.

There are different cultures between the Chinese people and the Americans. Chinese people like to talk a lot. In contrast, to become an American-feminine, one has to talk as little as possible. As a second generation immigrant, the narrator has to adapt in both the cultures for the Chinese school and the American school. She goes to two schools because her family wants practice their original Chinese culture. At the same time, she goes to American school to use English language. Because of these different cultures, she is in between. She does not belong to Chinese or America. She pretends to be like both American as well as Chinese simultaneously.

The narrator finally decides to blend the cultures that surround her. That is why she reflects her life through the story of Tsa'i Yen (206). Tsa'i Yen was one of Chinese women poet, was kidnapped by barbarians. Tsa'i Yen doesn't feel comfortable with barbarians, the race that captures her. However, she spends years there to adapt herself as those barbarians. Although she has been adapting her new tribe of barbarians, doesn't mean that she forgets who she is in real. She shows it by singing song in Chinese words that assimilates with Barbarians' reed pipe. Tsa'i Yen composes a group of songs whose Chinese phrases of sadness, anger, and exile are nevertheless understood by barbarians. Just like Tsa'i Yen, the narrator chooses to walk in between the cultures. In comparing herself with the Chinese poet, she remains in the middle of two cultures. The narrator here imagines herself as Tsa'i Yen, which means she too wants to walk in the middle of two cultures- Chinese and American which exposes the ambivalent situation of the narrator.

The poet's position in exile among barbarians is analogous to Kingston's position as a Chinese American. The narrator like Ts' ai Yen, the writer who is dislocated and must struggle to make sense of contradictory discourses if she is to comprehend her identity. The narrator at first does not like the talk story told by her mother. She even does not like to listen about Chinese cultures and traditions but at the last of the novel she herself is telling a talk story like her mother, which is reflected as: "I also talk story. The Beginning is hers and ending is mine. I too talk story about China" (206). Here too she shows her ambivalent position just by showing her both likes and dislikes towards the talk story of China.

Brave Orchid, the Narrator's Mother

Not only the narrator but also another important character in the novel Brave Orchid becomes the victim of ambivalence regarding her culture and nation. She is

totally dislocated in America. The narrator's mom Brave Orchid, is the representative of emigrant Chinese who fiercely guards the customs and tradition of their people. In the novel Brave Orchid too has suffered considerable cultural shock after coming to America. She is medical doctor in China who cures people where she describes herself very proudly; "I am a doctor", she told her new slave (81). But she left her homeland China and arrives in America where she is unable to find the job of doctor but rather she has started to work as a manual worker.

Brave Orchid is frequently haunted with the memory of the past-her being a doctor in China, treating the sick people. Though she is in America at present, she cannot come out of the delightful experience of the past. Brave Orchid's identity is lost due to mixing of two cultures after she comes to foreign land. In America, she wants to follow Chinese cultures and tradition. She educates her children with 'talk stories' which includes myth, legend, family history and ghost tales. Through the talk stories, she extends Chinese tradition into the lives of her American children and enriches their imaginations. Yet the narrator describes about her mother talking stories which were double edged; "she said I would grow up a wife and slave, but at the same time she taught me the song of woman warrior, Fa Mu Lan" (20). Here the narrator is confused by her mother too and her talk stories.

The narrator believes that her mom is a typical American lady who even does not change her name after coming to America. After coming to America she wants her identity as Chinese. The narrator describes her mom as... "Even when she emigrated my mother kept Brave Orchid, neither American name nor holding one in reserve for American emergencies" (77). Physically she arrived in America but China is in her mind. Every time she remembers China. She shows her hatred towards America. She treats America as geographic space of ghost and machines. She teaches

her daughter to think that all the white people around them are ghost because for Brave Orchid just like ghost, America and American people do not have any feelings and emotions, they are strangers for Brave Orchid without any identities. Though she is in America she shows her anger, rage towards it. She thinks that America is nothing more than machines and ghost. Kingston's narrative poses; "But America has been full of machines and ghosts. Taxi ghosts, bus ghosts, police ghosts, tree trimming ghosts" (97). Here, Brave Orchid regards everything as ghost. For her, America lacks the proper identity and no one could understand America and its people. They are really machines without any feelings, emotions, and so on. Just money is everything for them. Americans just think of money. Money plays great role for them than humanity.

After coming to America, Brave Orchid keeps on following Chinese tradition and culture. She could not be totally remain away from her own culture after coming to new land. Following her native culture in foreign land gives rise to hybridism. Even inside her home Brave Orchid cooks Chinese dishes instead of American ones. She wants her family members to have Chinese food and dishes:

My mother has cooked for us raccoons, skunks, hawks, city pigeons, wild ducks, wild geese, black- skinned bantams, snakes, garden snails, turtles that crawled about the pantry floor and sometimes escaped under refrigerator or stove, catfish that swam in the bath tub "the emperors of China used to eat the peaked hump of purple dromedaries," She would say "they used chopsticks made from rhinoceros horn and they ate ducks' tongues and monkeys' lips". (90)

After reaching to America, Brave Orchid follows Chinese cultures. She wants her children to follow Chinese over Americans culture. Chopsticks are used by Chinese

while eating. In America she used chopsticks instead of forks. Brave Orchid is completely haunted by her own homeland. For her China is only her “home”. She never stops referring to China as “home” (99).

The memory of Brave Orchid’s past life which was better than the present haunts her much as she finds difficulties in adjusting into a new cultural setting. Brave Orchid is totally dislocated in America. She hates American land and its people though she is living there for years. She always remembers her own homeland China in resentment to America. She has bitter experiences of transition from China to America, and Chinese culture to American culture. Being a renowned doctor in China, she has to toil first in a laundry followed by a tomato field in America. She has never washed her clothes in China, she has to work like machines for hours in a foreign land. She complains about her American life, time and again: “I have worked too much. Human beings do not work like this in China. Time goes slower there” (105). In America, she has to work like machines. She remembers that Chinese would not work much like her but she is compelled to work there. She too is nostalgic for her Chinese life: “I would be still young if I had lived there in China” (106). She thinks that America has snatched youth from her. Because of hard work she becomes old. She praises America, considering China as the as a best place to live in. However, she has reluctantly been living in the United States.

Brave Orchid is a typical Chinese though she is in America. She creates a new culture in America which is apparently different from America and China. It is an imagined geographic space of a hybrid culture. Though she hates America, she is still in America and China is geographically far from her. She can neither turn to eastern nor to western and thus, she becomes hybrid identity.

Despite her hatred of America, she remains in an ambivalence in terms of her

country, nation and culture. On the one, she could not stop talking about China and praises it and shows her anger at America that has snatched her age, youth, time everything. On the other, she even did not go back to China as she heard the reports of communist killing her relatives:

I do not want to go anyway ... I have gotten used to eating and communists are much too mischievous. You should see one I meet in the field. They bring sacks under their clothes to steal grapes and tomatoes from the growers. They come with trucks on Sundays and they are killing each other. (107)

Brave Orchid is against communists and their behaviours. She complains about communist. “Communist” refers to the Chinese. Brave Orchid on the one side shows her hatred of America and on the other side she shows her hatred to the Chinese and she even denies going back to China. Here, she is in middle of two cultures she neither supports China nor America. She shows her hatred of both the countries which creates the problem of ambivalence. She is in the state of confusion.

The narrator is also confused about her mother’s dress. She states: “she recently took to wearing shawls and granny glasses which is American dress” (100). In China she wears a dress that suppresses any hint of sexuality; “Chinese dresses at that time were dart less cut as if women did not have breast” (59). Now the narrator is in confusion about her own mother’s culture. If her mother does not want to follow American culture, why has she worn American dress instead of Chinese one? On the one hand, her mom says that she is typical Chinese who wants to follow all Chinese culture and tradition. She wants her children to follow them as well. On the other hand, she herself is following American culture by wearing American dress. It depicts

the cultural ambivalence of Brave Orchid that she shows both attraction and repulsion towards America.

Although Brave Orchid regularly denigrates American culture, which she views as wasteful and uncivilized, yet she too adopts it in one sense. There is the practice of hanging pictures of living relatives on the wall of the house. There is also the portrait of Brave Orchid and her husband. When Moon Orchid notices her sister's and brother in law's picture hanging opposite her grandparents' on equal footing then she asks the reason for it with her sister. But that time Brave Orchid replies casually in an American tone. This dialogue goes like this: "Oh, look", said Moon Orchid, "your picture up too. Why is that?" No reason. Nothing", said Brave Orchid. "In America, you can put up anybody's picture u like" (122).

Brave Orchid is guided by American culture and puts her picture as equal with grandparents. After coming to America, she began to follow American culture, though she denies it. In the Eastern society, more importance is given to parents and grandparents. Children show deep respect to their elder ones but America lacks this. Likewise Brave Orchid too after coming in America somehow forgets the tradition and cultures of China. It means she sometimes becomes angry with American culture and in some way she follows its culture too which is ambivalent situation of Brave Orchid that she loves and hates America.

Brave Orchid does not think English as a language. She will not master English because she thinks English as "barbarous". She even does not allow her children to speak in English. It is articulated as: "Here the children spoke English, which their parents didn't seem to hear and make them silent" (123). She wants her children to speak Chinese instead of English.

After Moon Orchid Arrives in America, at Brave Orchid's home they have

food in typical Chinese tradition without any sound. It is revealed, as: “they cooked enough food to cover dining room and kitchen tables. “Eat!” Brave Orchid ordered. “Eat!” she would not allow anybody to talk while eating” (123). It is the Chinese culture to be silent while eating food. Again here Brave Orchid follows Chinese culture. She does not allow her children to talk while eating. She sometimes follows American culture and sometimes Chinese culture due to which she remains ambivalent. She becomes confuse because of mixing of two cultures at once.

Even at the airport Brave Orchid takes two bags full of homemade food when she goes to pick up her younger sister Moon Orchid. It is described, as:

On the floor she had two shopping bag full of canned peaches, real peaches, beans wrapped in taro leaves, cookies, Thermos bottles, enough food for everybody but she knows that only she would eat that. Her bad boy and bad girl were probably sneaking hamburgers, wasting their money. (113-14)

Here comes the clash of culture between Brave Orchid and her children where she is in the support of Chinese culture and her children are in support of American culture. Her food represents Chinese and children’s food represents American culture. It seems that her children are following American cultures and norms. Because of mixing of two cultures, the novel reveals the cultural gap between two generations.

The judgment of American cultures to Chinese cultures influence the way Chinese kids behave in their schools. It is said in the story that Chinese kids including the narrator go to two different schools; American and Chinese school. The reason behind it is perhaps their parent’s love for American culture. At the same time, they do not want their kids to forget Chinese traditions. Brave Orchid says that she has cut the narrator’s frenum in her tongue:

I cut it so that you would not be tongue-tied. Your tongue would be able to move in any language. You'll be able to speak languages that are completely different from one another. You'll be able to pronounce anything. Your frenum looked too tight to do those things, so I cut it.
(164)

Brave Orchid herself confesses that she has cut her daughter's tongue in order to make her able to speak different languages including Chinese and English. On the one hand she explains that she does not like English but on the other hand she wants her daughter to speak different languages including English. Here she shows her love towards English which makes her an ambivalent character.

Moon Orchid, the Narrator's Aunt

Kingston in order to depict the shades of cultural ambivalence also brings the character Moon Orchid. She has been living in Hong Kong for a long time and recently arrived in the United States in order to get her husband who has been Americanized.

Moon Orchid suffers a lot because she is not able to assimilate into the American culture. She neither returns to Hong Kong nor does she adjust in America. She becomes the victim of biculturalism. Every time she is afraid of America and its culture. She feels as if it is following her and wants to kill her like ghost. She also asks her daughter to find another apartment for her. Every time she whispers: "They are listening" (155). She totally loses her mental state and at last she is sent to mental asylum where she dies. Moon Orchid demonstrates the real situation of emigrants. Moon Orchid is complicated because, as Kingston writes, she is a dislocated character. She seems always to be dependent on someone else in order to belong. She is in a limbo between her husband, her sister, and her daughter and also between

China and the United States. She has experienced cultural shock after coming to America.

In spite of all these, Moon Orchid, too, is in ambivalent situation. She neither returns back to China nor adjusts completely in America. When she feels that she has been followed by American ghost, she tells her daughter to find another place for her to stay at Los Angeles, which is illustrated as: “Then she had asked her daughter to help her find an apartment at the other end of Los Angeles” (155). If Moon Orchid is really afraid in America then why she tells her daughter to find place at Los Angeles despite China, her own homeland? It is so because she does not want to go away from The United States at all. It means she on the one hand wants to go away from America and on the other hand still wants to stay in America. At once, she shows her attraction and repulsion towards The United States which gives rise to ambivalence.

Moon Orchid’s Husband

The narrator in order to show further ambivalent situation in the novel, even brings her uncle, Moon Orchid’s husband. Moon Orchid’s husband is a neurosurgeon who has been living in America for a long time. Moon Orchid’s husband marries an English lady. We can note that Moon Orchid’s husband marries an English lady means he has adopted English lifestyle, norms and values. He is a complete hybrid figure.

He has married an English lady to justify that he is an Americanized person. According to the law of America one cannot have two wives at the same time. One can divorce and marry another. However, Moon Orchid’s husband has got two wives at the same time. He has not given divorce to his Chinese wife. When she comes to America, he becomes somehow afraid which is illustrated, as “I could get arrested if the Americans knew about you. I am living like an American” (153). He is afraid of

the law of America on one hand, and he has kept two wives on the other hand. If he wants to be like an American, why has he not given divorce to his first wife?

Ambivalence is revealed in Moon Orchid's husband that at once he is guided by both America and China. Divorce is practically a Western culture. In the Eastern culture one can have more than one wife at the same time. Here he is in the middle of both cultures. He neither wants to divorce his Chinese wife nor does he want to stay with her. He at once shows his attraction to and repulsion from his Chinese wife.

Moon Orchid's husband is living with his American wife .He does not allow Moon Orchid to stay with him because she is a Chinese lady who has no idea of American culture. He thinks that she cannot adjust into American society. He says: "Look at her. She'd never fit into an American household. I have important American guests who come inside my house to eat" (153). He says to Moon Orchid, "You can't talk to them. You can barely talk to me" (153). Here, Moon Orchid's husband adopts the Western life style. He stays there with American lifestyles, norms and values and does his profession. He too wants to go away from Moon Orchid and Chinese culture. He does not want Moon Orchid to go away from America. He wants her to stay in America which is illustrated in the novel, as: "Do you want her to go back to China then?" Brave Orchid was asking. "I would not wish that on anyone. She may stay here in America but either with you or with her daughter" (153-4).

Here outwardly Moon Orchid's husband is guided by American culture. He does not want to stay with Moon Orchid, and he has married a white American lady. At the same time, he is guided by Chinese culture in his intent to retain his Chinese wife in the United States. It is the ambivalent situation that he cannot make one proper decision. He is guided by two cultures at the same time.

Moon Orchid's husband even promises his Chinese wife to help her though

he is away from her. He intends to support her financially. He tells her: “You go and live with your daughter. I will mail you the money as I have always sent you” (153). Moon Orchid’s husband is emotionally connected to his Chinese wife while remaining physically away from her. He still wants to give her all comforts, luxuries and facilities. Kingston’s narrative replicates ambivalence that is rooted in Moon Orchid’s husband. He is in the middle of two cultures. In America he is following American cultures and norms. However, he is confused whether to follow the American culture or the Chinese culture. He can neither totally be detached from Chinese culture nor from American one which places him in ambivalent situation.

Despite of his hatred to his Chinese wife, again Moon Orchid’s husband shows himself in an ambivalent situation by bringing a lunch to Moon Orchid and Brave Orchid when they both come to meet him which, the novel reveals as: “The least you can do,” Said Brave Orchid, “is invite us to lunch. Aren’t you inviting us to lunch? Don’t you owe us a lunch? At a good restaurant?” (154). So, he bought them lunch. Here, if Moon Orchid’s husband really hates his Chinese wife then why has he bought a lunch for them? He still has feelings for his Chinese wife. So, he bought them a lunch. Outwardly, he behaves rudely to his Chinese wife but, inwardly he still has feelings towards her which makes him complete hybrid figure.

In *The Woman Warrior*, Kingston portrays cultural ambivalence being experienced by herself as well as by her characters. Thus, ambivalence is embedded with colonization, immigration and dislocation that they have to undergo where they remain in the middle of two cultures or nations.

CHAPTER FOUR

Impact of Cultural Ambivalence

In *The Woman Warrior*, Kingston articulates the impact of cultural ambivalence embedded with biculturalism. In this novel, she unfolds the problem of the Asian Americans in America where they neither belong to Asia nor America. By presenting different characters, she projects the actual condition of emigrants. Because of the problem of indirect colonization and the Opium War between China and British, many Chinese left their own homeland in search of better opportunities in the United States. After reaching America, they engage themselves as cheap labors in factories and roads. The emigrants also refer America as “Gold Mountain” (*The Woman Warrior* 1).

Kingston, through this novel, injects the penicillin of ambivalent situation because of her upbringing into two cultures. Kingston herself is the victim of ambivalence as she is the daughter of Chinese born parents. In the novel, Kingston shares with her readers her transcultural experience created by biculturalism. As the main character as well as the narrator of the novel, Kingston describes her plight where she neither returns to China nor adjust completely in America. She is not of her mother’s world i.e. China. Because of her ethnicity, she fits imperfectly into the country of her birth, i.e. the United States. She is torn in between two national narratives, two sets of cultural myths and two heritages in which she has grown up.

Kingston, the second generation immigrant, has to stay in America along with her mother’s talk story, Chinese culture and tradition give her the sense of belonging to two cultures. After having a long contact with the American whites and blacks along with her ancestral Chinese culture, the third culture is produced. This is called a hybrid culture. Kingston lacks her original culture and feels dislocated due to which

she is unable to find her single identity in the United States. The narrator is growing up with Brave Orchid's stories about their family, and about Chinese myths and legends. Those stories affect her character, as much as the surrounding does. The narrator has several phases in her life. Each phase faces different issues, but they all shape her. Due to her mother's tendency to follow Chinese culture and tradition she feels herself as Chinese inside the house. Because of her upbringing in America, she wants to show her identification as an American. Kingston on the one hand goes to American school and on the other hand goes to Chinese school, and thus, remains a hybrid cultural product. Because of following two cultures at the same time, the narrator becomes a hybrid figure.

Brave Orchid, the narrator's mother, is another embodiment of ambivalence. On the one hand, she shows her rage toward America that has snatched every things from her including youth, eternity, time and profession. On the other hand, she follows American culture by hanging her picture as equal with her grandparents' one which is just opposite of Chinese culture and tradition. After arriving in the United States, she becomes the victim of biculturalism by which she remains in ambivalent situation showing both attraction as well as the repulsion towards the place where she is at present.

Moon Orchid, the typical representative of Chinese society, also has to undergo many problems that she cannot assimilate into American society due to which she has to give up her own life. Her husband in effort to adopt the Western values and tradition remains in ambivalence since he neither divorce his Chinese wife nor stays with her in China.

In their transcultural experiences, all of Kingston's characters are culturally dislocated in the United States. As complicating identity is the result of biculturalism,

a double existence that produces in the descendants of immigrants. It is the feeling of belonging to two distinct cultural traditions yet not feeling comfortable in either one, due to which they remain in ambivalence. The author as a Chinese immigrant, living in an American society, has to deal with living in two different cultures which both influence how she behaves.

To sum up, *The Woman Warrior* portrays cultural ambivalence in characters. None of the characters are there without affects of bicultural condition. Asian American often becomes the victim of cultural dislocation and hybridism which give rise to cultural ambivalence. In this way, the researcher reaches to the conclusion that ambivalence, biculturalism, dislocation come as the problem among the emigrants when they leave their homeland and come to the new place for settlement.

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