

The Chinese ‘Gold Mountain’: the Chinese Immigrants’ Experience in the West in Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* and Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club*

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to highlight the way the Chinese people perceive the West: the region of liberty and the land of opportunity. This study will be conducted in the light of Chinese American writer, Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*. The paper proposes that the Chinese immigrants are no more in need of “Anglo- conformity” in modern America (Kymlicka 14). The extent of space, America gives to her immigrants, is making this State of America “gold mountain” for those who find themselves “slaves” in their indigenous land (Kingston 1- 11). Furthermore, this paper will bring forth the circumstances, under which these Chinese immigrants see America as a place giving space to individuals, to discover their identity in the adopted land through “dialogue with others” (Bakhtin 116; Taylor 34). The nature of socio- cultural gap between these Chinese and their indigenous land-living, leading to fascination for America, is also a prime focus of this paper. Thus, presenting forth America as a tract of diversity, this paper will place the Chinese people as observers in the West. Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* will be used as secondary text. For an in-depth analysis, theoretical frame work comprising Will Kymalick’s Multicultural Citizenship and Bakhtin’s ‘dialogism’ will be applied to approach the literary texts.

Keywords: Chinese Immigrants, America, Gold Mountain, Identity, Dialogism, Multiculturalism

Introduction

“Retaining an affinity with one’s culture of origin nurtures and validates one’s original identity, whereas involving oneself with American culture facilitates the development of competence and sense of well- being” (Ying 5).

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The Chinese diaspora living in America for decades, see United States as a "gold Mountain" (Kingston 1; 54; 61; 86): a place where one who isn't even from this gold mountain, as far as the origin is concerned, can establish and flourish oneself as a dignified individual. American State has the capacity not only to accommodate but to make these Chinese immigrants excel in every field of life, providing them standard life-style to pursue their dream, to have a share in American dream. On the other hand, what makes America conspicuous on the entire map of the world is its receptive nature: it has ever embracing posture for those who have the potential to assert their existence (as Ying has referred) and have the courage to "carry out the ideas into the real world" (Kingston 73). Kingston finds America as a place where her origin and ancestry are not to be of great consequences or value as she remarks that, "in America I had free speech and free press...I have realized that I am an American" (65), keeping allegiance to her native country at stake. What matters is just the individual's tendency to keep pace with ever progressing America, to own the country and endeavor hard to be one with Americans to which Kingston, in her interview, points at thus, "there is such a struggle to establish one's claim to America" (65).

The Chinese people find the opportunity to excel and make their way through success like any American citizen in United States, keeping staunch belief in the notion that hard work leads to accomplishment and realization of one's self. They don't find any principles based on discrimination, in the State's policy. The promise of success goes equally to everyone who has the potential to make efforts for survival, irrespective of origin, class, color and ethnicity. This exceptional feature in American policy is talked about aptly in Amy Tan's fiction *The Joy Luck Club*, wherein the mother makes her daughter believe in the way United States supports every individual to come in to the mainstream thus, "I taught her how American circumstances work. If you are born poor here, it's no lasting shame. You are first in the line for scholarship... In America, nobody says you have to keep the circumstances someone else gives you" (Tan 176). The mother believes in America and her effort of internalizing this belief into her daughter's consciousness alludes to the fact that American State plays crucial role in establishing every individual who is born or migrated to America. According to Tan and Kingston, America for Chinese is an apt specimen of what Will Kymlicka theorizes as modern State thus "a modern State is 'multicultural' in either of the two senses of the term. It may be multinational, since it's member belong to different nations, or may be multicultural because it's 'polyethnic' since its members emigrated from different nations" enjoying "freedom of choice"

regardless of their place of origin (qtd. in Kukathas 408- 409). Thus America for these Chinese immigrants, is a place where their fate isn't in other's hand but in their own.

Literature Review

Chinese immigrants don't feel constrained within American Culture having the feeling of abandoning their indigenous culture as American life style endorses "pluralistic policy" and "cultural pluralism" (Kymlicka 4; Yack 4) allowing these immigrants to follow their indigenous tradition, in terms of dressing and eating habits, linguistic discourse and religion (Kymlicka 14). In following such practices, they would not seem to be "unpatriotic" (Kymlicka 15). American State, embracing these Chinese immigrants, allows them to keep their customs and traditions. Kingston has also pointed out this very factor through her narrative, in which she uses Chinese slangs within English narration, implying the nature of reception she feels in American culture. At metaphoric level the mingling of these two languages i.e. Chinese and American English while living and having her work published in America, Kingston alludes to the cultural freedom and flexibility that United States offers. In her interview Kingston has deliberately affirmed this notion of hers when she makes the following remark, "It makes me feel very good about the looseness of modern American language that allows everything to come in. and that's the way life is" (146). Thus America, for these individuals, is what Mimi Lambert remarks "a life line: a passage out of China" (qtd. in Ling 154), that's why Kingston's mother toward the end of the novel remarks, "we have no more China to go back" (66): the sense of consummation she feels in America is enough to get along with American life stream. Going back to China would banish the pursuit of prosperous fate of the protagonist's mother.

What makes Kingston and Tan think of America as a land "full of imagination" (Zhang 14) and land of opportunity and prospect, is arguably due to their gender. For women, living in America is not much different from men's experience of living there. For these Chinese American writers, America has provided the opportunity to excel and make their way through the challenging life. It's through drawing comparison between the protagonist narrating the experience of women living in China and in America that she makes the readers realize the strength of her existence within American ambience. In Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, these "two discourses... exist side by side intersecting dialogically, regardless of whether they confirm, mutually supplement or contradict one another" (Bakhtin, qtd in. Bezecsky 327). This dialogue and confrontation between both the cultures leads ultimately to the superiority of American one. The

protagonist in *The Woman Warrior*, has explicitly made strong and convincing argument that girls are marginalized in China as from protagonist's childhood, she remembers how the girls were shunned off as some burden, she remembers that the people used to say that, "there is no profit in raising girls... it's better to raise geese instead of girls... when you raise girls, you raise children of strangers" (Kingston 30). While equating girls with geese Kingston has shown the disgust of her native Chinese people for the female gender. Zhang confirms these remarks of Kingston's thus, "I am ashamed that these negative feelings for women have not yet been wiped out from Chinese mind... disregard for women is deeply rooted in the Chinese" (19). After giving the descriptive account of women's position in China, Kingston moves further to bring forth the details of life of Chinese women in America, liberating women from the shackles of traditional China. Kingston finds her "mother's eyes strong and boulder in America" (38), this physical change in her mother rather alludes to the transformation and constructive life she has got in America, Kingston herself time and again turns herself to "American feminine" (32) finding it progressive for her survival. American femininity has the aptitude to unfetter her identity from the burden of Chinese tenets. Furthermore, Kingston says that the Chinese people believe in superstitions that make them a bit passive and odd to the world outside whereas when they migrate to the West, they find the "new world of liberty and reason" (Zhang 18).

The Woman Warrior is a detailed account of the protagonist's assimilation and transformation into American person: one helping her to survive under the broad umbrella of the Western realm. Komenka brings forth the similar argument commenting on Kingston's fiction thus,

Kingston's version expresses her own Western education and her mature desire for independence... Her childhood among ghost' and her American maturation have persuaded her that her Chinese origins are complex, emotional and mysterious, while American culture is prosaic, texture less and safe... *The woman warrior* can be read as a social document, the report of a participant- observer (Komenka 108- 115).

What Komenka sees in adult Kingston, passion for America for the sake of her self-realization, is seen as humiliating and "hateful" to Wilcoxon as for him, Kingston has exaggerated and defamed Chinese values while putting USA in such a higher position in order to entice and fascinate the Western readers: for him Kingston has 'betrayed' her aboriginal community (317). What Wilcoxon is missing in his approach to Kingston

is the examination of the kind of life Chinese women have to go through as “families are glad to be rid of them (women)... they are maggots in rice” (Kingston 28). The nature of life Kingston got at American hand was completely opposite to her native values: America gave her confidence to accomplish herself, to come face to face with realities and challenges of life in order to mark her presence. As far as Wilcoxson complaint of ‘exaggeration’ is concerned, in her interview on being asked that since she has been far away from her roots, so what about her own views of representation of China: are they closer to reality? to which she remarked thus, “I felt that the China of my imagination was very similar and I felt really good that I had such a strong imagination” (142). It was the constrained customs, values and the pressure of Chinese community that made Kingston think to get her novel published after her death and later she decided to publish it thinking that “it’s in English... thus her parents and most of her Chinese friends would not be able to read it” (143). Kingston’s description of female existence in China is verified by Zhang in her essay when she says that, “the disregard for women, in China, is persistent till now” (19).

Writers like Kingston and Tan glorify America because it’s here, they find the chance to give vent to what is suppressed for decades in Chinese female subjectivity. This freedom is relished by these individuals who have known the restricted life of their mother and grandmother back in China. Freedom of speech given to writers like Kingston and Tan alleviates America before Chinese immigrants, for whom this right was denied in their autochthonous land. Zhang interprets Kingston’s narrative as an act of resistance as she asserts that, “Kingston uses words and stories to rebel against the old and contribute to the new” (Zhang 19). Alluding to the conflict between Chinese language and the American one, Zhang takes a stance that language for such individuals like Tan and Kingston is a tool of liberation. Kingston herself remarks “I keep saying look at my language. The book I am writing now I feel that I wanted to free myself from being constrained and I wanted to use another voice of mine which is modern” (23), this new voice is thus the voice of America within her. Furthermore Zhang has been unable to observe that the case she has put is not that simple that Kingston is going through the conflict between both the languages for the sake of resolution: in fact it’s language through which Kingston has to establish her allegiance with “solid America” (Kingston 47) as she herself states explicitly that for her survival in United States, she has to adopt American language, otherwise “they would ask her to go back, from where she has come” (16).

When Kingston makes her wish to use 'another language', she makes it quite clear that within her own self, she is going through linguistic dialogue. The protagonist is constantly making efforts to bring these voices in dialogue with each other to construct the self, she aspires. The way she mingles the Chinese slangs within the English flow seamlessly, the way she carries facts and fiction with remarkable balance is what Paul De Man, tracing Bakhtin's stance, puts thus: "the dialogical relationship is intra-linguistic" between what Bakhtin himself calls "heterogeneous voices", in a musical flow (102). These diverse voices within the protagonist are curtailed by the virtue of American dulcimer. The same argument is put forth by Serandour when he states that "memory and time erase the deformed things heard in childhood, American customs fill the void" (131). It's the American culture that helped her to resolve the tussle between both the voices within Kingston. Since this "intra- linguistic relationship" ultimately leads to "intra- cultural relationship" (Bakhtin 103), the ghost that Kingston brings in her memoir times and again opens up the whole phenomena of value system in both the cultures, the writer belongs to. In Chinese context the ghost defines the "ethnolinguistic boundaries that those who live within these limitations are normal and sane but those crossing the line are ghosts" (Komenaka 110). When the scene turns to America the nature of 'ghost' changes: here ghost alludes to the machine-like life of people as Kingston remarks, "America is full of machines and ghosts- Taxi ghost, bus ghost, police ghost, fire ghost, meter reader ghost... white ghost and their cars" (62). The nature of ghost Komenaka talks about in Chinese context is evident in Kingston where 'no name woman' has to face segregation from community because she ventured to deviate from the norms whereas 'woman warrior' is accepted in her community because after all she has presented herself to the role the society has ascribed for her: to do "house work, and give (her in laws) more sons (Kingston 30). The narrator has to respond to these ghosts in accordance with both the cultural and linguistic discourse and then has to come to terms with respective context to survive among the 'ghosts' while "negotiating, partly overt, and partly internal, with others" (Taylor 34) finding herself as a "third party in a quarrel" (Bakhtin 115). Hunt sees this tussle between both the discourses as an "unfinalizable dialogue" (1): unceasing process of negotiation. What Taylor and Bakhtin are proposing is exactly what Kingston states, "The Woman Warrior isn't an 'I' book, it is the voices 'I' hear inside myself, whereas in my book I put the voices that I hear around me" (146), it is the American life that has given her the capacity to curtail these 'heterogeneous voices' to overcome the 'ghosts' as she emphasizes over and over again that she belongs to 'solid America', "proud America" (Kingston 47; Tan 145).

Methodology

This research entitled “Chinese’ Gold Mountain: A Study on Chinese Immigrants’ Experience in the West” is carried out in the light of Chinese American Writer Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*. The major focus of the work would be the analysis of the spectacles through which the Chinese people see America and how they perceive American life style. The comparison Kingston draws between the American picture and the Chinese one is worthy of observation. For in depth study, Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of “dialogism” between two distinct cultures and diverse voices within an individual will be applied along with Will Kymlicka’s stance on relevant argument in *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995). Furthermore, Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* will be used as secondary text. The study will not only be carried through the domain of literature solely but it will also incorporate the domain of sociology and politics and psychology as well in order to bring forth a comprehensive study. For political approach along with Kymlicka’s political theory, Charles Taylor’s work on “*Multiculturalism*” (1994) will be consulted. The research will focus on the procedure through which Chinese immigrants, finding loop holes and short comings in their native land-living, find America a perfect place to establish their “identity in open dialogue” (Taylor 36) with “American spatial and cultural realm” (Edwards 573) to pursue their “speaking voice” against “secret voice” (Kingston 45; 7) for self-realization and demarcation of their existence. The paper will also highlight the way “American immoral extreme” (Edward 579) in certain cases affects these Chinese who have to cope with different kind of American ghosts through “participating in dialogue, to ask question, to respond, to agree and so forth wholly and throughout the life” (Bakhtin 293). For detailed analysis, online scholarly articles of renowned journals and books dealing with concerned take will be used. The nature of this research paper is qualitative: method applied will be exploratory and explanatory simultaneously.

Analysis and Discussion

America is the focal center for the Chinese Americans, who see their dreams taking the form of reality having the West in back drop. The protagonist in *The Joy Luck Club* brings in the mentioned aspiration thus, “My mother believed that you could be anything you wanted to be, in America... you could become rich, and you could become famous... America was where all my mother’s hopes lay” (Tan 126). The mother of the protagonist in Tan’s fiction is hoping what every other Chinese does, while entering the threshold of American State. For Chinese immigrants,

America is the epicenter of their prosperous life and hope of promising future, giving them their desired objects; self-realization, voice to speak out, material prospect and meanings of existence. What the mothers in Tan's memoir and Kingston's autobiography see in America, is brought forth by Shen that these mothers having gone through humiliation at the hand of Chinese customs, came to "America for a better life" (13) where "boy or girl doesn't matter" (Tan 257). Shen's remarks of America giving better life is manifested in Kingston's narrative when while referring to American values and culture Brave Orchid says that "in this country, many people make their daughters their heirs" (Kingston 79). The fascination for America for such individuals is based on the hope of exercising power and dominance that has been denied them in China. It's in America where Kingston got the voice of resistance against female subjugation. She has endeavored, through her narrative, to capture and rewrite "Chinese American feminist subjectivity in a way that would transcend Chinese patriarchal tradition" (Lim 205). The kind of exposure and freedom, America provides the individuals like Kingston, is what hoists America in the eyes of Chinese women, who have seen China as a place where "if even nothing happens but just gossips, the blame falls on a woman" (Zhang 20). Kingston puts America as "beautiful nation" (111) against Chinese nation as "weird" (99) on which she is criticized for being unfaithful to her indigenous community. Thus Kingston in order to "integrate in to larger society" of the West (Kymalicka 11), like other Chinese, prefers "fluid United States" over "China's old tradition" (Fong 122). The socio-political background shouldn't be undermined behind Kingston's differentiating both the territories as her mother's scorching experience within the Chinese boundaries are worthy to be considered.

Chinese immigrants who see America, providing life full of material prospect, have got a lucid realization of the United States as a challenging territory. America comes to the fore, before Chinese, as a place where survival is a matter of earnest perturbation. It's this harsh life of America Moon Orchid's husband refers to thus, "you don't have the hardness for this country" (98) It takes the whole of an individual to fit in American society as Brave Orchid who used to be a strong and sturdy woman in China becomes weak due to American hard life. Life here is no more than a flickering moment as Brave Orchid remarks that, "this is a terrible ghost country, where a human being works his life away... no time for acrobatics. I have started working since the ship landed ... I have worked too much. Human beings don't work like this in China" (Kingston 65-66). The ghost Kingston refers, in American context, is the static life where there is absence of the essence of life; drenched into mechanical and

monotonous interminable cycle. Mobility seems to be at peek here where sun never falls down as Brave Orchid remarks, life within human self is becoming stagnant, not having time to reflect inside or outside to have a break for the sake of revival of the soul. The nature of mechanic life Chinese find in America is lacking the quintessence of life and its diversity where these immigrants “cannot sleep because it doesn’t even shut down for the night... always somebody, somewhere working through the night. It never gets done all at once” (Kingston 66). The kind of agitation Kingston talks about is pointed out by Zhang who witnesses in Chinese American writers the constant impression that “hardships have forced ‘them’ to fully develop their physical as well as mental potential, in order to adjust to the vigorous competition for survival in the United States” (Zhang 47). They have to let go the leisure of life on the cost of “melting in to mainstream of America to become world citizen, transcending class and nationality” (Zhang 46), going against “unitary self” (Taylor 302). But these immigrants seem to be at ease on the cost they are paying: transforming them in to “urban ghost” (Kingston 65).

The definition of house in American and Chinese context is rather distressing for Chinese immigrants for whom, house in America is the individual space whereas for Chinese, house alludes to the union within the community. The protagonist’s mother in *The Woman Warrior* wants to feel the warmth of Chinese house in America as she says that, “I want you here, not wandering like a ghost... I want every one of you here all home, all six of you with your children and husband... then I am happy... that’s the way a house should be” (Kingston 68). The house Brave Orchid refers here indicates the strong sense of community and bond for which China is known for. This sense of community and affinity is marred by American dream to excel in the competitive world. American life style is devoid of warmth of kinship. The indifference and apathy within relationship is in the air of America: Chinese finding this tendency toward individualism, try to assimilate with it, whereas traditional and old Chinese find this distance hard to digest as they have remained in close knitted family circle for a long time. This endorsement on the individualism isn’t something that’s avoidable nor do people living there have control over this force to push it away in order to germinate the sense of community as “American circumstances are to be blamed for the distance” (Foster 30), distance is in the very soul of the country: Americans can’t do else way. The detachment and aloofness have become the style of the country and over the decades American citizens have internalized that disinterestedness is the reason behind success of the masses. What Brave Orchard is lamenting over and Foster is pondering over is quite explicitly spoken about by Kingston during her interview thus, “the only way to achieve success in America is

by doing it individually. American society is not made to rise together as a group, and it becomes a problem" (142). Chinese have to peel off the kinship in order to survive the tides of the American speedy wind as they have to cope with the "world of culture and the world of life" (Bakhtin 117); the "dialogue between heterogeneous elements" of culture (Chinese values) and life (American tendency) in the context of Chinese Immigrants, wherein America leads to what Musil puts as the "magical unity" (qtd. in Hunt 117). Thus these individuals suppressing their indigenous values look for the musical unity wherein they could secure a bit of native culture that is evident when Moon Orchid is helped out by Brave Orchid, who manages to bring her to America to find her husband there; a place where no one has time for other ones but being an American citizen now she is compelled to turn her down by denying her a long stay ending in Moon Orchid's death in mental asylum in the 'ghost' city of California where everyone is alien to others. This side of America is "disappointment" for narrator where she sees "business suited in modern American executive guise" (Kingston 29, 31) but keeps silent to remain the part of the "great and perfect America" (Shen 7), "forming their identity in open dialogue" with the ghostly nature of day to day American life (Taylor 36). Chinese Americans don't subvert this tendency of America as it promises them a lot at the cost mentioned earlier as Shu remarks that, "Kingston never challenges individualism per se and actually deploys the discourse of individualism as a means to fight against Chinese tradition and to articulate her identity" (204) as this "diverse other" (Bakhtin 24) of herself is profitable for her; it (American one) gives her the means of articulation of herself. Thus, American success follows the policy of what Gaurtz puts as "becoming human being is becoming individual" (qtd. in Li 498).

America fascinated the Chinese American because these immigrants found America not only as a means to assert their existence but also because they found it place full of machines to make money and sustain themselves. But at the same time their obsession with earning money made them bereft of any humane feeling and emotion for their dear ones. Moon Orchid will not have the courage to ask for her right to live with her husband because "she had been receiving money from him from America" and the money, food and servants then become substitute for her spouse (Kingston 78). Mercenary pursuit of American life alienates the family members from each other, this fact is put forth quite deliberately by Moon Orchid thus, "he never writes letters. He only sends money order" (Kingston 81). What Kingston has got the opinion regarding America providing money machines is brought forth by Shu thus, "China's attraction to the United

States was, of course, not only ideological and for reason of diplomacy, but for the financial goal as well” (Shu 207). Similarly, Tan’s protagonist finds America as a place of “becoming rich” too (126). Money being substitute for warmth within relationship is captured by Kingston appropriately when she remarks “Chinese don’t smile for photograph. Their faces command relative in foreign lands- send money- and prosperity forever- put food in front of this picture” (34). Chinese consider American State the most apt place of earning money to enjoy the life of luxury and superfluity. Kingston puts forth the same observation thus “immigrants pouring into United States from China have higher aspirations toward their dealings, becoming rich” (54). Moon Orchid’s husband reception to her wife is the hallmark of American life intervening familial bond when he rebukes her thus, “it’s a mistake for you to come here. You can’t belong... you go live with your daughter. I’ll mail you the money, I have always sent you” (97). American life and resources here don’t let these immigrants to sustain the bond within their family as they are no longer in need of “the blood of poor farmers, but the blood of billionaire as Bill Gates” (Xiong n.p.).

Chinese living in America find American modern life as a mask or garb that these individuals have to wear to be one with Americans. They have to negotiate and communicate “not only for others but for themselves, through dialogue” (Bakhtin 252) to curtail the mechanical extreme that American life offers. They have to “change their names” (Kingston 35) to fit in the surrounding. Along with name, the whole role of such individuals is reversed in different direction in order to accommodate within American society. This mask helps the masses to “somehow keep their youth” (Kingston 99); this youth is retained at the cost of giving away the pleasure to live life as they have to enacting life. On the other hand, this kind of youth retaining tendency takes away the very essence of living being, to what Kingston refers as, “American children have no feelings and no memory” (70). This absence of feelings and emotions alludes to the ‘life like’ existence of Americans on which Tan’s protagonist comments thus, “Americans don’t look at each other when talking. They talk to their reflections... they never see how they really look. They see themselves smiling without their mouth open” (Tan 254). The nature of mechanic life Americans live, leads them to social segregation having no time to interact with their dear ones. This hollowness is something difficult to get along with for these Chinese American but on the other hand they make use of this mask in their favor to survive among the people of “gold mountain” (Kingston 45). Without wearing mask, survival of the masses in America is hard to even imagine. It’s better for the immigrants if America is to “change from a model of modernity to a model of excess with in which

China could be posited as modern and moderate" (Edwards 571). The nature of ghosts Kingston talks about in American context can also be interpreted as this shallow life of United States where people, out of hedonism, through material objects become more or less like ghost repeating the monotonous day today routine of life in such a ghastly manner that it would extract every bit of pleasure, leaving only bodies lurking without any sense of assemblage.

Conclusion

Thus, having mentioned concisely the whole scenario in specific domain, it can be inferred that what the Chinese see in America, is a life that promises and actually gives a lot to these individuals but at a certain cost. This cost is paid quite willingly by these Chinese as they observe that the profit is of more worth. These immigrants have a lucid realization that "today's Chinese in United States are evolving from their past" (KangKang 43), the past which is narrated by the protagonist of *The Woman Warrior* thus, "I did not want to go back to China. In China my parents would sell my sisters and me. My father would marry two or three more wives" (Kingston 62). She doesn't want the past to take the form again in future: Kingston's protagonist, like many other Chinese "wants the future to redeem the past to make it a part of a life story which has a sense of purpose" (Lyshaug 304). The future and sense of purpose is found in America where Kingston could face her "internal multiplicity" (Taylor 304) to come to terms with American society while keeping Chinese values too. Furthermore, Kingston sees "American culture as contact zone in which Chinese and American culture and expectation collided, revealing the degree to which American values influenced Chinese worldview" (Wong 208), introducing the whole world to these people. American State provided these Chinese with a chance to enter into the "dialogic relationship rather than closure or finalization" (qtd. in Irving 24). This dialogue is evident when Kallen sees "America as a union of distinct nationalities" (qtd. in Citrin 252). This 'dialogue' and 'American union' of diverse nations is what Kingston aspires for thus, "I was trying to find an American language that would translate the speech of the people who are living their lives with their Chinese language... I had to find a way to translate all that into a graceful American language" (71). The aspiration of Kingston attached to America seems to be a surviving force for these immigrants who cross the border toward America hoping to achieve their goals, repressed by indigenous land: seeing America as "a model for modernization" (Wong 202) and a track to success and fulfillment of dreams. America gives these individuals an opportunity to

“envisage a different type of America in order to forge a new type of China” (Edwards 571): to get engaged in “contesting voices from various cultures and ideological positions engaging equally in dialogue” (24) to come out of pang “creating new songs in strange land” (Serandour 132). Having experienced the life of constraint in China, American life is liberating force for the Chinese immigrants who wrap “American success around like a private shawl” (*The Women Warrior*, Kingston 33).

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