

**The New Characters of Chinese American Second Generation in Stockton  
Chinatown in 1960s as Reflected in *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood  
Among Ghosts* written by Maxine Hong Kingston**



**THESIS**

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## **MOTTO**

***“Apabila engkau selesai mengerjakan suatu urusan,  
kerjakanlah yang lain”( Al Insyirah 7)***

***“Be grateful and you’ll get more!” (Ibrahim 7)***

***“Spend & God will send”***

***“Happy is one who owes nothing”***

## Dedication

In a modest and simple way from the deepest part of the heart, I dedicate this piece of writing with great feeling of love and respect to beloved:

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Surakarta, July 22, 2003

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE.....	i
THE APPROVAL OF SUPERVISORS .....	ii
THE LEGITIMATION OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS .....	iii
MOTTO .....	iv
DEDICATION .....	v
APPRECIATION .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	ix
ABSTRACT .....	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .....	1
A. Background of Choosing the Subject .....	1
B. Scope of the Study .....	8
C. Problem Formulation .....	8
D. Objectives of the Study .....	9
E. Significance of the Study .....	9
F. Research Methodology .....	9
G. Data and Source of Data .....	10
H. Collecting Data Method .....	11
I. Processing Data Method .....	11

J. Theoretical Approach .....	12
K. Thesis Organization.....	14
 CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	 17
A. Socio Cultural Background of Chinese American .....	17
B. The Life and Change of Chinese American Women .....	21
C. Theories of Socialization.....	27
D. Dual Education Systems .....	33
E. Career and life of Maxine Hong Kingston.....	35
 CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS.....	 40
A. The Reasons of Chinese American Second Generation to Change Their Characters.....	40
1. Historical Experience .....	40
2. Social Experience.....	49
3. Economical Experience.....	54
4. Educational Experience.....	58
B. The New Characters of Chinese American Second Generation .....	65
1. The Characters of Chinese American Second Generation.....	67
a. Working Hard.....	67
b. Encouraging Privacy .....	69
c. Enforcing Equality Among Parents and Children.....	72

d. Thinking Rational .....	78
e. Developing Self-Confident .....	84
2. The Characters of Chinese American Women Second Generation .....	88
a. Optimistic .....	89
b. Outspoken .....	94
c. Independent .....	100
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION.....	103
A. Conclusion .....	103
B. Suggestion.....	108

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## ABSTRACT

**Desy Khrisdiyanti, C0396025, The New Characters of Chinese American Second Generation in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s as Reflected in *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* written by Maxine Hong Kingston**

Maxine Hong Kingston (1940-...) is one of the greatest Chinese American woman authors, who give a great contribution to Asian American literature. One of her literary works, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts* constitutes a unique writing according to Asian American critics. Not only because of the content but also the genre are unique. Maxine Hong Kingston has combined her imagination and real experience in an autobiographical form.

This research is a library study research, which applies descriptive method to give clear information about the Chinese American national character changed in the WW. The objectives of this research are to investigate the reasons of Chinese American second generation to change their characters and to find out what they are.

To analyze the data, the researcher uses interdisciplinary approaches. The researcher combines sociological and literary approaches. Sociological approach is applied to analyze the socialization process and its connection to the character changing. Literary approach is to understand the structure of the work, which was the result of observation and reflection toward the phenomenon in the real life. Moreover, both approaches share the same problem to learn.

From the result of analysis, the researcher finds that historical, social, economical, and educational experience constitutes the reasons for Chinese American second generation to change their characters. Furthermore, Chinese American second generation are able to change their characters based on American culture as the White society had.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Choosing The Subject

The United States of America is well known as a country of many groups. It is also called a nation of nations. Supporting the previous statement, the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Group Literature* mentioned that almost 106 groups inhabited America today, including the native of America –the Indian-, Afro-Americans, Albanian, Arabs, Burmese, Chinese, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Jews, etc.

The various ethnic groups above came to America for many reasons. They heard some rumors that America was a promising land, where every body could have a chance to be wealthy. It became a rich country because the finding of gold mines in California, the successful field of agriculture, and industry. A novel written by Maxine Hong Kingston, translated into Indonesian by Vicky Gunawan entitled *Petualangan Laki-laki Cina*, told the readers about the richness of the country and the easiness to get treasure there. There was written that Maxine's great grandfather, in a party to welcome his coming back from California, told a story to the family, that it was so easy to get golden grains from the side of the streets. In the gold mountain the shepherd got hundreds of cows, it was not like here where a shepherd only got one cow. Moreover, a family could eat meat, which was enough for his family members in China for a whole month (*Petualangan laki-laki Cina*, Vicky Gunawan, 1982, 32-33). Although it might be an exaggeration, it was really true that America had gold

mines and cowboys with hundreds of cows to be kept an eye. They, the cowboys, miners, laborers, or farmers, were European leaving their countries for several reasons.

Representing the white race, the Puritans immigrated to America to pursue the freedom in doing their faith because in their origin country, England, they were chased and assassinated for the reasons of wide spreading heresy teachings and disturbing public order. The Irish came to America in order to get a better life as they failed harvest. So were the Italian and Germany, they came with a great hope to get better life for the family they brought.

The Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese in this case initiated the coming of Asian immigrants, more or less were affected by the rumor about gold rush in California in 1849. Most of the Chinese came from Toishan district in Kwantung province, a rocky and infertile plateau with a little field to grow agriculture industry. To gain fortune or seek good luck, they would rather wander around the world, including California.

Later on, there showed up the first generation of Chinese American that tried to interact, assimilate, and acculturate with the people and culture of America. Nevertheless, the white American considered the Chinese would not be able to assimilate biologically and culturally as they had a different faith and dress code (Thomas Sowell, 1989).

Perhaps it was because most of the Chinese American first generation was uneducated coolies or workers, who came to get any work with any rate of salary. It

became a threat to the existence of the White laborers, who asked for higher salaries. As the number of Chinese coolies increased, the unfair competition to get the higher salaries and the a priory feeling, leading to prejudice and discrimination toward the Chinese American first generation, rapidly grew up.

What the white American had done had a relation to the superior feeling. Distinctive races became a threat toward their superiority and the distinction had to be eliminated America. Chinese exclusion law 1862 up to 1943 was one of the evidence of the efforts of United States Congress to limit the number of Chinese in America. They had barred the entry of Chinese laborers for more than a decade. Consequently, the Chinese were the first race to be excluded solely on the bases of their race.

Another way to retain get superiority was through education. It can be ascertained that American people should be very superior in the education world development compared to other countries. The President Lyndon Johnson's the Great Society program, such as education and health insurance supported the issue. The insurances, including scholarships, grants, and work-study programs to the local district school, could be used to reach as high as possible education to attain success in every sector of living.

The success of the American in raising their lives through education was seen as positive side by the first generation of Chinese American. They realized that proper education was one of the keys of American success and education could be one of the ways to get the exiled self-dignity. Therefore, most first generation enrolled their children to the public school, which used American education system.

They gave time and money to the young generation, boys and girls, to enjoy the education as high as they could pursue. They did not want the later generation felt the some bitterness as they did. In addition, the first generation could use their children to vent their frustration of being discriminated, so that they could try to get them all get ahead and be better than the Whites or at least equal anyway.

Being equal as other American citizens was the goal of attending American school, yet the first generation gave attention to the importance of ancestral culture. Therefore, they established Chinese school for younger generation to study Chinese culture and tradition.

Every education system had their-own goal. In brief, for example, American education system gave the priority to produce experts through cultural transmission, consisting three elements, namely preservation, innovation, and dissemination of culture. It was equivalent to socialization of American culture to assimilate the immigrants into the mainstream culture (Ornstein & Miller, 1980, 442). Meanwhile, the Chinese education emphasized the goal on creating the ability to appreciate high culture of the ancestor and to practice them in their daily activities.

The circumstances, unconsciously had led the generation to shape different characters from the elder generation. On one hand, they could not be totally American because physically they were Chinese and they also built Chinese cultural environment. On the other hand, they also could not be genuine Chinese since they had assimilated themselves with American culture, so that the first generation could not fully accept their way of living. Furthermore, the generation shaped their unique

characters constituted the mixture between Chinese and American characters. The character changing has become an important reason for the researcher to take the second generation of Chinese American as a material research.

Later on, the research was started when the researcher read an attractive book written by Maxine Hong Kingston, entitled *The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts*. It was written in 1976 and was published by Random House Inc., New York in 1989. Some Asian American critics named it as a fictional book using autobiographical form because she combined two genres of literary work, fiction and autobiography. She put more her imagination, based on the legend of Fa Mulan, a warrior woman, who took her father place in the battle to fight against oppressive rulers. Then, she added her real experience in her girlhood among her imagination.

The book is, indeed, a unique writing and worth reading. Besides, it has won a National Book Nonfiction Critics Awards. One of the strength of this book can be seen from the title, namely *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of A Girlhood among Ghosts*. When the researcher read the title, the researcher felt that the title gave a power to investigate more and more the whole content of the book. The feeling was influenced by the general opinion assumed that the term warrior only fit to men and masculinity. In this novel, however, Maxine offered that "warrior" was also appropriate to women. Woman warrior, in her opinion, fight against her taken for granted fate given to them as physically weak creatures. They also prove that women were able to place themselves equal to men in every segment they wanted to or who

fight to get a proper education to be better than men.

*Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts* constitutes a record of her girlhood among the American that were called ghosts. This “ghosts” has given a special touch to the imagination of the researcher to seek more what ghosts are. It seemed having something to do with superstitions and spirit world. Maxine, in her book, intended to explain that it has two meanings. The first is the spirits, good and bad. The second is how the Chinese named other races, especially the White American, and the American machines, such as public health nurse ghost, social worker ghost, mail ghost, garbage ghost (Kingston, 1976, 98).

The content of the book is even more attractive especially for Asian reader, just like the researcher. The power of the diction used by Maxine gave such a deep impression. Moreover, she performed a romantic epic legend of Chinese woman warrior, Fa Mulan, in her own version. She also wrote some stories containing of mystery. It can be seen from the subtitle of the stories, *No Name Women, White Tigers, Shaman, At The Western Palace, and A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe*. As the evidence it has won a National Book Nonfiction Critics Awards.

The researcher finds that the book performs the profile of Chinese American family in 1960s. They lived in Stockton Chinatown, some miles in the southern of San Francisco. It was known that in this decade many occurrences happened, begun from the assassin of President Kennedy, Civil Right Movements, up to the glory of entertainment business and TV show and craze dance in teenagers’ realm. However, an important issue held by the government that had significant influence to the Chine

American was the Great Society as mentioned above. The government set up Migrant Opportunities or now Training and Migrant Education Department, so every immigrant could get education for their children. The book was stated that the immigrants in Stockton area, including Chinese immigrants, could enjoy the education in public school.

The family represented the first and the second generation. The first belongs to the parents' generation, who still practice the ancestral tradition. Nevertheless, they realized that education was significant as they were also educated in China. Meanwhile, the second belongs to the younger generations, who interact, socialize, and assimilate with American culture as well as get Chinese education from the parents and Chinese school. The point is that the researcher finds there are differences between them and the way they performed the character.

The meaning of character itself, according to Roucek and Warren, namely the organization biological, psychological, and sociological factors that serve as a basis for one's behavior. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* stated that mental or moral qualities that make a person, group, nation, etc different from others (1994: 188). Meanwhile what is meant by character by the researcher is the whole specific feeling, desire, and motivation found in a certain generation, different from the previous generation, equivalent to the cultural values they socialize and assimilate with.

From all facts mentioned above the researcher arranged a thesis entitles  
**The New Characters of Chinese American Second Generation in Stockton**

**Chinatown in 1960s as reflected in *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts* written by Maxine Hong Kingston.**

**B. Scope of the Study**

This research will be limited on the Chinese American society in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s -especially Chinese American women, as in the novel women become the protagonist- although the Chinese American in general will also be discussed. Chinese American women got a unique experience, which need to be explained in a particular place. That is about their life in China and the traditional views following them and their later life in America as Chinese American women, which completely brings difference to their later experience. All limitation is done in order to get the accurate data in analyzing and answering the problem formulation.

**C. Problem Formulation**

After learning the data gathered and reading the novel as the data source, there are found two problems by the researcher. The problems are:

1. What were the reasons of Chinese American second generation in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s to change their characters?
2. What were the new characters of Chinese American second generation in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s?

#### **D. Objectives of The Study**

This research will be done in order:

1. To investigate what the reasons of Chinese American second generation in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s to change their characters.
2. To inform what the new characters of Chinese American second generation in Stockton Chinatown in 1960s were.

#### **E. Significance of the Study**

The researcher hopes that this research will:

1. Give some information about the new characters of the second generations of Chinese American, especially the new characters of Chinese American women.
2. Give a contribution to other researchers, who want to arrange a thesis and dig deeper on the same novel as this research.
3. Give a contribution to American studies about the Chinese American as one of the national character builder.

#### **F. Research Methodology**

Just as mentioned above, the significance of the study is giving a clear depiction and some information about Chinese American contribution to national character building. The researcher will apply the descriptive method. It is equivalent to what Isaac and Michael said, that descriptive method is used to describe the

situation, condition, characters, and other facts systematically about society (Isaac & Michael, 1985).

Nazir also wrote in his book, *Metodologi Penelitian*, that descriptive method will also analyze the status of a group of people (social role), their way of thinking, and the happening happened among them.

### **G. Data and Source of Data**

In order to do this description, the researcher have gathered:

#### **1. The data source**

The data source is got from the novel *The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of Girlhood Among Ghosts* written by Maxine Hong Kingston, which was published in United States by Random House, Inc., New York, and originally published in hardcover by Alfred A. Knopf Inc., in 1976.

#### **2. Main data**

Main data includes characters interaction, narration, dialogues, and interpreted phenomenon found in the novel.

#### **3. Supported data**

The supported data can be gained from books, articles, or critics connected with the theme of the research.

### **H. Collecting Data Method**

In this research, the method of collecting the data is through library research.

This method is started by reading and understanding the work, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*, and then collecting the related informations, which support the problem. Other supporting literature reviews are treated in the same procedure.

### **I. Processing Data Method**

There are three inseparable and continuous phases in processing the qualitative data. They are:

#### **1. Description Phase**

In this phase the problems is clarified and the data are edited and clarified is needed.

#### **2. Analysis and Interpretation Phase**

In this phase, the theory, which becomes the basic of this research, is applied. The researcher will show the application of literary, sociological, and biographical approaches upon the data in WW in order to get the fact in informational form, and then interpret and crystallize them into a more detail form.

#### **3. Evaluation Phase**

This phase has a function as the judgment step as well as to evaluate the results from the previous phases.

## **J. Theoretical Approach**

The research belongs to the division of American studies and as it is known that American studies is not only a learning of the geography of American, but also a deep learning to the culture and heterogeneity of them. In order to analyze them it is used the interdisciplinary concept.

The focus of interdisciplinary concept is the relationship between texts to be studied and the contexts from which they come. In this case, the text is a literary work of Maxine Hong Kingston, namely *The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts*. Then, the contexts of this research will be known by combining some disciplines, they will be literary and sociology.

First thing to be considered in learning a literary work, according to Henry Nash Smith, is that it is a socio cultural document. However, to learn the literary work is to learn the structure –such as theme, plot, characterization, setting of time and place (Habsari: 1992, p. 48).

When a literary work is analyzed, it can be seen that the work contains the same elements as sociology does. It can be said that way because a literary work, including fictional work, constitutes the results of the observation and reflection of the author toward the phenomenon occurred in the real life. Nevertheless, literary and sociology have shared the same problems to learn. By using those ways, a study to a work has characterized as interdisciplinary because in the mean time it has been used sociological, and literary approaches (Habsari: 1992, 49).

More specific, according to Paul B. Horton and Chester L. Hunt, sosiologi

mempelajari masyarakat dan perilaku sosial manusia dengan meneliti kelompok yang dibangunnya, mencakup keluarga, suku bangsa, masyarakat dan pemerintahan, organisasi sosial, agama, bisnis, dan lain-lain, (Aminuddin Ram & Tita Sobari, 1991: 4).

Social behavior constitutes in-group interaction in tracing their origin and analyzing the influences and the group activities toward its members.

Meanwhile, in *Sosiologi I*, Samuel and Suganda stated, sosiologi: proses belajar seorang anggota masyarakat untuk menerima dan menyesuaikan diri dengan unsur-unsur kebudayaan, yang berupa cara-cara bersikap, bertindak, dan berinteraksi dalam masyarakat (Sanneman Samuel & Azis Suganda, 1997, 53).

On the other hand, Selo Soemardjan and Soelaiman Soemardi have another definition, that sosiologi adalah ilmu yang mempelajari struktur sosial dan proses sosial, termasuk perubahan sosial (Taufiq Rahman Dhohiri,dkk., 2000, 11)

In details, both sociologists define that struktur sosial adalah keseluruhan jalinan antara unsur sosial yang pokok, yaitu kaidah-kaidah sosial atau norma sosial, lembaga dan kelompok atau lapisan sosial, dan proses sosial adalah pengaruh timbal balik pelbagai segi kehidupan bersama.

The theories above for the researcher are viewed as guiding theories in analyzing and answering the problem formulation. One important thing from sociological approach is to learn the social process within individual in order to live and conduct equivalent to the values and norms inside society he belongs. Then, the manifestation of values and norms that can be seen by other people through the way

of interaction with others, making decision, or choosing our life style constitute characteristics. Therefore, characters are something can be formed after an individual or a group of individuals consider that they need to do some changes in order to be accepted by the new society.

The changes made were closely related to the experience they underwent. Chinese American had passed through the socialization with the White society and they had enough experience to perform new characters the society wanted.

Thus, such case also occurred to the Chinese American within American society. One formed of Chinese American interaction with the white American can be seen through the world of education. Started by this point, the young generation of Chinese American learnt and adapted the culture of America. Later on, it will be learnt how they could come to the social change after processing themselves in the education system of public school. The result of the interaction and the social process in the new society through education system is the new characters. Theories of socialization will help in learning the process of characters changing.

## **K. Thesis Organization**

This thesis will be organized as follows:

### **Chapter I.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. Background of Choosing Subject
- B. Scope of Study
- C. Problem Formulation

- D. Objective of The Study
- E. Significance of Study
- F. Research Methodology
- G. Data and Source of Data
- H. Collecting Data Method
- I. Processing data Method
- J. Theoretical Approach
- K. Thesis Organization

## Chapter II.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- A. Social Cultural Background of Chinese Immigration
- B. The Life and Change of Chinese American Women
- C. Theories of Socialization
- D. Dual Education Systems
- E. Career and Life of Maxine Hong Kingston

## Chapter III.

## ANALYSIS

- A. The Reasons of Chinese American Second generation  
to Change Their Characters
  - 1. Historical Experience
  - 2. Social Experience
  - 3. Economical Experience
  - 4. Educational Experience
- B. The New Characters of Chinese American Second

## Generation

### 1. The Characters of Chinese American Second

#### Generation

- a. Working Hard
- b. Encouraging Privacy
- c. Enforcing Equality Among Parents and Children
- d. Thinking Rational
- e. Developing Self-Confidence

### 2. The Characters of Chinese American Women

#### Second Generation

- a. Optimistic
- b. Outspoken
- c. Independent

## Chapter IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. Socio cultural Background of Chinese Immigration**

Today there are more than a million American of Chinese ancestry whose history in the United States has been one of travail as well as triumph. Americans began interacting with China and its people when the clipper ship *The Empress of China* set a sail from Boston in 1784. In the ensuing years, a few Chinese sailors, artisans, entertainers, and merchants visited North America, but significant numbers of Chinese landed on the Pacific coast only after the gold rush to California began in 1848.

Chinese immigration can be divided into four periods. The first period, began from 1848 up to 1882, was the period of unrestricted immigration. The next period was begun from the year of 1882-1943, 1943-1965, and 1965 to the present.

In the era of unrestricted immigration the number of Chinese immigrant increased strikingly. There were about 500 Chinese in California when federal census was taken, but it was not until 1852. Over the next three decades, some 322,000 Chinese came to the United States for whom San Francisco was the chief of entry. Only about five percent of the immigrants were women. Before the mid-1870s most of them worked as prostitutes, but as prostitution was wiped out, an increasing share of female population consisted of wives and daughters (Dictionary of American Immigration History, 1990: 125).

Until the turn of the century, the majority of Chinese immigrants resided in California. In the 1860s, Chinese began moving out of the state in two directions: Northward to the Pacific Northwest and eastward to East Coast metropolises, particularly Boston, New York, and Washington D.C.

The free entry of Chinese ended in 1882 when Congress of the United States passed Chinese Exclusion Law. Chinese were kept out of the United States until 1943, when the laws were rescinded by Congress as a gesture of good will toward China, the ally during World War II.

Chinese fitted into American society in divergent ways according to region where they settled and time when they came. During the nineteenth century, they earned a living in three kinds of regional economics: mining, agriculture, and urban employment, such as cooks, domestic servants, common laborers, and factory workers in garment, shoes, or textiles factory. Later on they began to run their own business in laundries and restaurants (Dictionary of American Immigrant History, 1990: 128).

Though Chinese immigrants decided to earn a living in the United States, they had to face and against enormous hindrance in living among the majority White society. Not only because they have to be in a society with a different culture, social structure, religious beliefs, and language, but they also underwent severe discrimination in many areas of living.

Economically, Chinese had to pay the Foreign Miners' Tax, the poll tax, and other discriminatory levies that took away a significant portion of their earnings,

laundry ordinances and restrictions against the type of fishing nets they favored soon drove them out of their occupations. Whereas they also faced violence, boycotts of the products they made, and barring from the Union Labor membership. There were no longer found Chinese in manufacturing industries in the end of nineteenth century.

Politically, Chinese were not allowed to testify in court, to become naturalized citizens, or to vote. Anti miscegenation laws prevented them from marrying white women, while immigration restrictions forbade Chinese women and wives from entering the country. After 1924 Immigration Act allowed them to enter and meet their men. Therefore, the number of their second generation composed very small until the 1920s (Sucheng Chan, 1991: 104).

After Chinese Exclusion was over, the Chinese were given an annual quota of only 105 persons. However, all of those who were ethnically Chinese, regardless of where they were born or which countries claimed them as citizens, were charged against the Chinese quota, whereas the same rule did not apply to immigrants of other national backgrounds. In this period, more Chinese entered under special legislation than under the meager quota allotted them. The two largest groups were war brides and political refugees.

After a Communist government came into power on the Chinese mainland in 1949, approximately 5,000 Chinese- most of them highly educated intellectuals and former government officials- were granted political asylum in the United States. More and more came under the same reason in the 1967, so that significant number of Chinese American spoke dialects other than the ones found in Guangdong Province.

Since 1965 during the presidency of Lyndon Johnson, Congress enacted a new legislation, which removed “national origins” as the basis for setting immigration quotas, as one of the reforms. The main objectives were to reunite families and to encourage the influx of people with certain kinds of skills and capital to invest. Asian immigrants were finally put on the same footing as people from other countries (*Dictionary of American Immigration History*, 1990: 127).

Although that way, Chinese immigrants who managed to earn a living in the United States had to do so against tremendous odds. They had to live in a different culture, social structure, and language. More than that, they faced severe discrimination in many areas of living as explained above.

Chinese immigrants, however, were viewed as threats to white racial homogeneity. They seemed to be posed as greater threats than Blacks and Indian. White workers had reasons to be alarmed the sinister Chinese were planning to take away their jobs and even their country. Then, many Chinese were killed during anti Chinese mob violence in San Francisco because they were foreigners and of another race, religion, and color, and worked for what wages they could get. White working-class grew hatred and cruel racism, at the end of their cruel action; yet they also depicted Chinese as mice-eaters, pagan, superstitious, and subversive to white labor and white racial purity (R. Takaki, 1989: 106-107).

As a result of White’s cruel prejudice and racism, toward the second generation, the Chinese parents repeatedly warned their children about the “whites out there”, “foreign devils” (*fan qui*), and “western people” (*sai yen*) who would

against them. They tried to prepare them for anti-Chinese discrimination they would experience in the larger society. They considered, for the second generation, education was viewed as the way to push aside the white discrimination in every area of life. The children went to public school to learn American culture. In the meantime, they also attended Chinese school in the afternoon to learn Chinese language and culture of the old country.

Second generation Chinese American felt the pushes and pulls of two cultures, Chinese and American. In actuality with their American ideas, thoughts, attitudes, and customs, they could not feel at home with the Chinese people although they had Chinese appearance. Many of them wanted more independence and more choice for themselves than their parents allowed. More specific, Chinese girls found they had to challenge traditional Chinese attitudes toward women. The strong pushes and pulls of American culture made them decide that they should create their own world between the two cultures.

## **B. Life and Change of Chinese American Women**

Ever since a Chinese daughter was born, they got different treatments compared to a Chinese son. The birth of a Chinese daughter seemed never to be expected. They were considered to be parasite until somebody took them as his wife and took her away from home someday. For her parents, her daughter had no important role at home.

There was a song in a Book of Song (*Shi Jing*), an old Chinese bible, that told

a story about the different role of a daughter and a son in a family.

*Black bears and brown  
Mean men-children.*

*Snakes and serpents  
Mean girl-children*

*So he bears a son  
And puts him to sleep upon a bed  
Clothes him in robes,  
Gives him a jade scepter to play with.  
The child's howling is very lusty,  
In red greaves shall he flare,  
Be lord and king of house and home*

*Then he bears a daughter,  
And puts her upon the ground  
Clothes her in swaddling –clothes  
Gives her a loop-whorl to play with.  
For her no decorations, no emblems;  
Her only care, the wine and food,  
And how to give no trouble to father and mother.*

The song above was the wishes of parents to have sons rather than daughters. Their sons would be treated and educated well because someday they would be the chief of the family or respected people, who lifted the family name. Meanwhile, daughters were not as valuable as sons to be treated well. The parents educated them to be good servants for the family and wished her to raise no embarrassing problem to the family. In the other words, girls stayed at home and waited for a marriage proposal. It was better to get no academic education because a tradition Chinese proverb said, “a woman without talent is a woman in virtue” (Amy Ling, 1990: 1).

In conclusion, historically, Chinese had assigned their women to an inferior and even expendable status. To restrict Chinese women from doing unexpected

action to ruin men's power and domination over them, they had done some actions physically and mentally torturing, such as the practices of foot binding, concubine, female slavery, and female infanticide (Amy Ling, 1990: 1).

There were created a blind obedience to women to make men's power absolute. Consequently, Chinese women only met three things during their life, namely obedience to her father in her girlhood, to her husband during her marriage, and to her son after her husband passed away (I. Wibowo, 2000:107).

No wonder, the circumstances had thrown Chinese women into the lowest position of the society rank and had put them in the position of having no power to fight against men's domination. Moreover, the worst was the circumstances had created them into creatures with negative characters. They became inferior, silent, and independent to their surroundings. The weak creatures that seemed did not have power to raise the self-dignity and bright future's lives.

Chinese girls began to be educated outside home partly as a result of Christian missionary activities and partly the time had come for changes (Amy Ling, 1990: 6). The condition, however, was not allowed all girls to enjoy proper education to improve their future because some of them had already trapped on the negative characters.

In the future, the wind of change blew to Chinese women's faces by the time of Chinese immigration. Although at the beginning the women could not immigrate to the United States –because of political and other reasons- they finally had the chance to catch the Chinese men immigration.

According to the United States Government record, the number of immigration women from China to the United States was so small until the mid of twentieth century. In 1852 up to 1861, from about 794 Chinese inhabitants in California only seven were women. It showed that the ratio of Chinese women to men in the United States was still no greater than one to twenty by 1880s. From the late of nineteenth century up to middle of the twentieth century, harsh laws severely limited the Chinese immigration, particularly Chinese women. In the era of Chinese exclusion (1882-1943) all Chinese were prohibited to enter the United States, except diplomats, merchants, tourists, teachers, and students. No women were admitted, then, from 1924 up to 1930. However after 1943, they could immigrate freely until in 1954 their number had reached parity with Chinese men (Amy Ling, 1990: 13).

Economically, Chinese women immigrated to the United States were working class with no education or the leisure to write or read books. Their lives had been engulfed by the duties of childbearing, childcare, and the business of earning a living (Amy Ling, 13: 1990). Most wives busy helped their husbands to run their business. Their working hour could be early in the morning till late at night while nurturing their children. Under hard circumstances, they still had no chances to change their lives rather than in China.

The good fortune finally came at the same time Chinese got a chance to attend American schools. Chinese-daughter parents in the United States sent them to schools as the parents did to the boys. At first, they got only little education. Then, as time passed by proper education was simply enjoyed by them.

Realized or not, American education reinforced a widening rift developing between Chinese women and Chinese culture, as what happened to the Chinese men (R.Takaki, 1989: 262). As the result of education, they viewed themselves as American and also wanted to look American. Distinctively from those Chinese men, Chinese girls bobbed their hair, wore sleeveless dresses, and looked like the little American flappers.

Sometimes the break from their parents and Chinese culture also involved self-rejection. They found they had to challenge traditional attitudes toward women because as it was stated above most parents did not believe in women and children (R. Takaki, 1989: 259). The moving to far away country did not make them improved their negative views toward women, so that socially and educationally Chinese American women, the later generation, suffered from “discrimination” of their or race.

In her book, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*, Maxine Hong Kingston stated such “discrimination” that socially made her and her sisters invaluable. Her mother, father, granduncle, and emigrant villagers had created perfectly dislike ness to posses and take care of daughters.

Rejection on responsibility upon caring and loving her really made Maxine overbearing. She could not stand hearing one of her parents or the emigrant villagers said, “Feeding girls is feeding cowbirds...you know how girls are. “There is no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls.” “I would hit her if she were mine. But there’s no use wasting all that discipline on a girl. “When you raise girls, you’re

raising children for strangers” (WW, 1976: 46), “When fishing treasure in the flood, be careful not to pull in girls” (WW, 1989: 52). The other time her grand-uncle madly said that girls were maggots who would eat all his food, “... Maggots! Where are my grandsons? I want grandsons! Give me grandsons! Maggot! Maggot! Maggot...” (WW, 1989: 191).

Maxine felt it was to exaggerate to say that way. Raising girl in America was not the matter of not educating her with discipline because somebody would take her as wife but gave women proper education so that they would lift the family name. The reason could be understood because Chinese did not like women to be clever and become heroine for the family, “The Chinese did not admire a bent back; goddesses and warriors stood straight...” (WW, 1976: 10) and “...Chinese executed women who disguised themselves as soldiers or students, no matter how bravely they fought or how high they scored on the examinations” (WW, 1976: 39).

Maxine’s parents and great-uncle felt embarrassed to take her and her sisters walking out in Chinatown because the villagers would find out only girls in the family. They would say something like a mock to her family, “...One girl and another girl,” they said, and made our parents ashamed to take us out together...”(WW, 1989: 46), and rejection to the presence of girls, “Come, children. Hurry. Hurry. Who wants to go out with Great-uncle...”I’m coming. I’m coming. Wait for me.” When he heard girls’ voices, he turned to us and roared, No girls!” and left my sisters and me hanging our coats back up, not looking one another...” (WW, 1989: 47). Elders from China still rejected the presence of girls in the family and did not pay attention to

them or never gave them any presents and give was one of the ways to show that the elders had power to erase the girls although not physically.

Those examples informed that Chinese American women still had to fight to perform themselves in what the elders wanted and what the white society wanted. Therefore, Chinese American women needed to learn why they were treated that way and how they could survive in perceiving those kinds of treatments.

Some reasons became the triggering factors for them to change their characters. Other than that it showed that Chinese American women particularly expressed their presence by building positive characters differently from those Chinese women ancestors in China.

### **C. Theories of Socialization**

An individual in the society will undergo socialization process in order to be able to live and behave equivalently as values and norms prevailing within the society all over the place they live. Socialization process in a society can function as an intergeneration cultural transmission because a society will not last much longer without socialization of cultural heritage of the ancestor.

Meanwhile a significant condition to attain socialization process is social interaction. There is no socialization without social interaction. Socialization, according to J.W. Zande, is the social interaction process through which we know how to think, to feel, and to behave so that we can take our role in the society optimally. David A. Goslin stated that socialization is a learning process within an

individual in order to gain knowledge, skills, values, and norms so that he can participate as a member of society (T.O. Ihromi, 1999: 30).

Whenever an individual does the process of socialization, he can be a social creature. It is basic characteristic of human beings, they always socialize themselves and do not want to be considered as weird person by others so that they always adapt with the society where he belongs. Therefore, for being a social creature, an individual is influenced by heredity, nature, and environment or nurture. Heredity is the factors brought ever since an individual was born. The factors are ascribed and constitute the genetic transmission from the parent, such as sex, skin color, etc that cannot be changed anymore. The environment is the outside factor influencing the individual in the way of survival. The environmental factors can change every time depending on how hard he tries to do the achievement. These factors are education, carrier, etc.

Those factors relate and complete each other in the building of certain characters or behaviors of an individual. It is impossible that behaviors and characters are shaped by heredity only without any influence from the environment, and so is on the contrary. The matter will be just about which one dominate more, the heredity or environmental factors.

If the process of socialization happens between two different cultures or two different nations –where there must be some adjustment or adaptation from the subculture toward the mainstream culture-, the process of socialization will come to what sociologists call assimilation. Assimilation is a process of socialization

characterized by the efforts to reduce the differences between individuals and group of people. Then, the result of it is some efforts to strengthen the unity of attitude, behavior, and thought by paying attention to the interests and goals of the two sides of nations or cultures (Samuel & Suganda, 1997: 207).

When assimilation goes on successfully, the process of socialization will continue to the next process called acculturation. It is a process of socialization in which a group of certain culture is faced on the other group of foreign culture, so that gradually the elements of the foreign culture can be accepted and without losing the characteristics of the culture itself (Samuel & Suganda, 1997: 69).

Within the member of the society, the young generation is faster and easier to accept the foreign element of culture through acculturation and internalization of the foreign culture. They will identify themselves to the new culture faster, so that it will cause some changes on their social relationship, traits, and social interaction with the older generation of the same basis culture.

Later on, the process of socialization will not be carried out without the doers, named agent of socialization. The agent of socialization will make the process keep on lasting to transmit certain norms and values according to the culture they retain. The agent also constitutes each member of the society and *significant others* (the other member of society whose relationship are the closest to the individual), such as the parent, brothers or sisters, close mates, the same age friend, teacher or instructors, etc.

Theory about *significant others* is extended by George Herbert Mead (Horton

& Hunt: 1964: 126). Mead also adds the theory about *self* (an individual with the ability to estimate his own behavior from other's point of view) and the stages of how *self* gets the ability above. The stages are:

1. Preparatory stage. It is the phase where individuals still imitate behaviors of others in the society.
2. Play stage. It is the phase where individuals develop their ability to see their selves. The activities of socialization process in this phase are still unorganized and the individuals play one role after another referring to what they need to perform to others. There is no clear concept about *self*. It usually happens when individuals have not optimally adapted with their surrounding society.
3. Game stage. The activities of socialization process in this phase are more organized and individual have been able to adapt with and play their own role in accordance with other's expectation in the society.

The other sociologist, Charles Horton Cooley, stated that one develops a concept of self through gradual and complicated process, which continues throughout life. It needs the help of other individuals. The process of discovering of *self* by the help of others has been labeled "*the looking- glass self*" (Horton & Hunt: 1964: 97). There are three steps in building *looking glass self*. They will be:

1. Our imagination of how we look to others or how are our appearance to other person.
2. Our imagination of their judgments of how we look.

### 3. Our feelings about their judgments.

This theory tells us that an individual tends to pay attention to what people think about their physical or mental appearance and to adapt to the surrounding environment as well as to think about what they will accept from the society if they perform the same behavior as them. People will not like to be called that they are different or weird because if so they will be exiled from the society. People like to belong or to be the part of the society. So, an individual will show another that he can do what people do.

From the side of literature, Martin Price wrote an essay entitled *The Other Self: Thoughts about Character in the Novel*. He stated that characters in a novel or other literary works also the same as the characters in the real society. As what Henry James said that the writer insists that writing must be born from the rational observation and experience of a well-deprived reality (ed. Thomas and Elizabeth Burns, 1973: 36). So, the characters are taken from the experience and the observation of the writers from the real society.

Just as the characters in the real society are influenced by *significant other* arose by George Herbert Mead, Martin Price said that the characters in the novel depend much on a certain group called *reference group*. *Reference group* that has the same function in the society as *significant other's* George Herbert Mead. According to Martin Price, *reference group* is those group to which the individual relates himself as a part or to which he aspires to relate himself psychologically (ed. Tom & Elizabeth Burns, 1973: 263). Further more, *reference group* serve as a major

anchoring for one's sense of identity. Meanwhile *significant other* is the group whose relationship is the closest to the individual, such as the parents, sisters or brothers, close mates and teachers or instructors at school environment, etc.

To see from both definitions, *reference group* or *significant others* can be different from one individual to another. It depends on how an individual can relate and aspire psychologically to a particular group. If they fit each other, they will have the closest relationship of other groups.

On the other side, an individual can make a relationship to reference group because he has the roles in the society. Roles are the aspects of self that respond to social demands. Moreover, Martin added that an individual or self is a composite of many selves; each of them consisting of a set of self-perception, which are specific to one or another major role and specific to the expectation of one or another significant reference group. When an individual or self has passed the preparatory, play, and game stage explained above, he will get a learned repertoire of roles called *personality* or later it will be stated as character.

The theories above will be used to analyze the Chinese American society according to the problem statement going to be suggested by the researcher. The theory of socialization is to strengthen that Chinese American socialize themselves to the American society whatever the result, it is successful or not. The way of socialization is by using the theory of *looking glass self* and *significant others*.

#### **D. Dual Education System**

Transmitting of knowledge and shaping of values of the students are the goals of

education, including transmitting culture of the mainstream society. In other word it can be said that education in general is equal to socialization.

Transmitting of culture that becomes a significant segmental in upper level of education system in formal institutions is functioned to prepare men for an elaborating structure of skilled occupations. In brief, education system has something to do with the leading to the mainstream culture so that a country can preserve its position as the super power nation in the world.

The purpose above was in accordance with the desire of American society in establishing education system. So, there was always a relationship between the American society and the education system applied to the society. It could be stated that the society in 1960s wanted education as concluded by Raymond E.Callahan in his book *An Introduction to Education in American Society*:

1. Education should aim to develop the power of critical, independent thought.
2. Education should attempt to induce sensitiveness of perception, receptiveness to the new idea, and imaginative sympathy with the experiences of others.
3. Education should aim to produce an awareness of the mainstreams of cultural, literal, and scientific traditions.
4. Education should make available important bodies of knowledge concerning nature, society, people, the country, and its history.
5. Education should strive to cultivate an intelligent loyalty to the ideas of democratic community.
6. Education should equip young men and women with general skills and

technique and specialized knowledge, which support to improve the technological development.

7. Education should strengthen the inner resources and traits of character, which enable the individual to be self-reliant.

American education system, more or less, is a planned process of cultural transmission, consisting of three elements, preservation, innovation, and dissemination (International Encyclopedia of the Social Science, 1968: 528). Education in America as an industrial country is characteristically aimed at the production of experts in every segment of life so that, the three elements in cultural transmission will be very useful to keep America as a number one industrial country.

Instead of that the American education system has emphasized the assimilation of immigrants into the mainstream culture in this case the Chinese American second generation is the focus of interest. Later on, the public schools were seen as the major force in bringing about the shift of identity of the generation of immigrants, especially Chinese American second generation (Orstein & Miller, 1980: 442).

Because of Americanization, the consequence of American education system toward the later generation of Chinese American immigrants is to lose the old values, emerging the cultural discontinuity and crisis in personal identity. They lead to the intergeneration problem. It means that the old generation does not agree with the changes of the new generation. The old one has enrolled them to the public and traditional school in order to make them able to lift up the status of social life without

leaving the high culture of the ancestors. However, the effect of it makes the new generation get away from the old values they do not like, although they still take the ones they like which support their socialization toward American culture.

Meanwhile, it was explained that the Chinese education system was not designed to produce certain skills, but rather to ensure that the people were broadly equipped with the high culture of the literacy. The education of Chinese is based on sacred texts, consisted in laymen teaching laymen, and the Hellenic schools were completely secular and designed for the education of a leisure ruling class (*International Encyclopedia of the Social Science*, 1968: 526).

## **E. Life and Career of Maxine Hong Kingston**

### **1. The Biography of Maxine Hong Kingston**

Maxine's story of life and literary works written here was taken from some resources, such as <http://www.cc.nctv.edu.tw/~pcfeng/CALF/chI.html/>, <http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/canam/kingston.html/> (September 10, 2001, 10:15:13 am), and *Between Worlds: Women Writers of Chinese Ancestry* by Amy Ling.

Maxine Hong Kingston was born on October 27, 1940 in Stockton, California. Her American name, Maxine, was given by her father, after a blonde woman customer in her father workplace who was always lucky in gambling. Ting Ting, her Chinese-name, comes from a Chinese poem about self-reliance. Her parents, Tom

Hong and Chew Yin Lan, had had two children in China before they came to America, but they died years ago before her mother came to America.

Before coming to America her father had been brought up a scholar, taught in his village of Sun Woi, near Canton. Tom left China for America in 1924, but finding no work for a poet or calligrapher. Then he took a job in laundry with three of his friends. Being swindled out of his share of the laundry by his friends, he then moved to Stockton after his wife joined him in 1939 in New York City. Before her coming to America, her mother was trained as a midwife in To Keung school of Midwifery in Canton. Tom had been offered a job in a gambling house. Although finally he could establish his own laundry after several times he was sent into jail because of his illegal gambling house.

Maxine's first language was Say Yup, a dialect of Cantonese. She grew up surrounded by other immigrants from her father's village, and the story telling she heard as a child influenced her later writing. She recalls the early part of her school education as her "silent years" in which she had terrible time talking. It is perhaps surprising that MHK could not speak English until she started school. Once she had learnt it, however, she started to talk stories. By the age of nine, her progress in English enabled her to write poems in her new language. Later, MHK, who flunked kindergarten, became a straight "A" student –an extremely bright student- and she won eleven scholarships that allowed her to attend the University of California at Berkeley. She began as engineering major, but she soon switched to English literature. She received her BA degree in 1962 and married Earl Kingston, a Berkeley

graduated and an actor. She returned to the university in 1964, earned a teaching certificate in 1965 and taught English and mathematics from 1965-1967 in Hayward, California. During their time in Berkeley, the Kingston was involved in the antiwar movement on campus. In 1967 they decided to leave the country because the movement was getting more and more violent, and their friends were to involve in drugs. They moved to Hawaii, where they both taught for the next ten years. Decades later, this silent and silenced woman is becoming a notable American writer.

Here is the chronology of Maxine's life:

1940: born in Stockton, California

1962: graduated from the university of California, Berkeley

1962: married Earl Kingston, a classmate at Berkeley

1964: gives birth to son, Joseph Lawrence Chung Mei

1965: earns a teaching certificate and begins teaching high school

1967: moves to Hawaii

1976: *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*

begins teaching at University of Hawaii in Honolulu

1980: *China Men*

1981: receives Guggenheim Fellowship

begins teaching English at the University of California, Berkeley

1989: *Trip master Monkey: His Fake Book*

## **2. The Works of Maxine Hong Kingston**

In about 1976, while Maxine was teaching creative writing at the Mid-Pacific Institute, a private school, she published her first book, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*. Before it she was ready to send this collection of fiction to the other countries or keep it for posthumous publication if she failed to find a publisher. Luckily, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. gambled on this unknown writer and published her book as nonfiction. To the surprise of both publisher and writer, *The Woman Warrior* became an immediate best seller. The book won the National Book Critics Circle awards for nonfiction in 1976 and was rated as one of the most top ten nonfiction books of the decade.

*The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* is a brilliant collage of myth, memory, fantasy, and fact on growing up female and Chinese American in a family dominated by a strong-willed mother. Its fresh subjects matter and style were surprised the reviewers, and they sang the praises of this poetics, fierce, delicate, original novel or memoirs. In the end of this book, her shy character finds resolution as she breaks female silence and inherits an oral tradition (Amy Ling, 1990: 126).

As late as 1989, it was still on the trade-paper back best-seller list. Maxine's second book, *China Men*, published in 1980, earned her A National Book Award. It is a non-fiction, companion to *The Woman Warrior*. *China Men* contains the experience of Chinese men in the United States, recreated from history embellished by immigration, from the mid XIX C until the present. It includes a chronological list of

discriminatory laws regarding Chinese immigrants and celebrates the strengths and achievements of the first Chinese men in America as well as the exploitation and prejudice they faced (Amy Ling, 1990: 144).

In 1987, MHK published a collection of twelve prose selections, *Hawaii One Summer*. After the success her first books, she was financially able to give up teaching as an occupation and continued to write, but she continued to teach on and off as a visiting professor in Hawaii, Michigan, and California. In 1988, *Trip Master Monkey: His Fake Book*, a picaresque novel set in the San Francisco area during 1960s, was published. The protagonist of this novel Wittman Ah Sing, is a fifth generation Chinese American and like many of Maxine's characters, he struggles to escape racism as he grows and questions the world around him. He is a Chinese American Berkeley graduated and would-be-writer, loses his job in a department store, marries a girl he meets at a party, works for his grandmother, and puts on a play that full of puns and verbal pyrotechnics (Amy Ling, 1990: 156-157).

## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

#### A. The Reasons of The Chinese American Second Generation to Change Their Characters

##### 1. Historical Experience

Historical experience will reveal the Chinese American first generation immigration, their coming as well as the interrogations process involved the immigration official, and the illegal immigration problem during the Chinese Exclusion era.

Maxine Hong Kingston, in *The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (WW), had recorded the difficulties of Chinese immigrants to run their life during the Chinese exclusion era according to the experience of her parents, Tom Hong and Brave Orchid.

Maxine found Tom Hong, who was well educated and was settled before his immigration, had a great expectation to make a better life for his family in America. He had heard from other immigrants' stories how rich America was and how easy to pick up gold from its mines. He believed he would also find good luck and fortune as easily as the prior immigrants did. However, he finally realized that the reality was not as good as his wishes. He felt it hard to establish prestigious business to earn a living in America, in the era of his coming.

Maxine also depicted how Brave Orchid immigrated to America. Her immigration to America was begun in the winter 1939 and the journey was ended by her arrival in New York Harbor in January 1940 (WW, 1976: 96). After the long journey, she started her new series of her life in America firstly signified by the interrogation of immigration officials.

The interrogation was carried out to find out some important things in accordance with the Chinese entrance. The government found out it important to know whether the just coming immigrants had legal immigration documents and whether there would be a good intention from them to assimilate themselves to American culture, which was appropriate to American slogan to Americanize its immigrants.

The Chinese immigrants must answer several questions dealing with their involvement to communism, which was glow in China. It was very important for American government to know whether the new coming immigrants were clean from communism, as it was known that the United States fought against communism. Moreover, during the era of Chinese exclusion, American government had restricted the entrance of Chinese immigrants to blockade the wide spreading of communism in America.

The next question was about Chinese men's pigtail. Pigtail was the Chinese men tradition to lengthen their hair and braided them as their symbol of loyalty to Manchu dynasty. Meanwhile American society considered it as a sign of tied-to-tradition as if the Chinese could not release Chinese culture from their lives in

America. The American hoped that they would be wise and would associate as other civilized Americans.

During interrogations in the immigration office, Chinese immigrants felt under pressure, as noted by Brave Orchid how she felt uncomfortable as the American official asked her the year her husband cut off his pigtail. Unfortunately, she absolutely forgot when her husband did the cutting, “What year did your husband cut off his pigtail?” and it did terrify her when she couldn’t remember. But later she told us perhaps this lapse was for the best: what if they were trying to trap him politically? The men had cut their pigtails to defy the Manchus and to help Sun Yat-sen, fellow Cantonese” (WW, 1967: 96).

Avoiding the tricks to kicked out her husband and herself from America, Brave Orchid cunningly made the immigrant officials believe what she said that. She stated that in China, cutting off pigtails revealed loyalties to Sun Yat-sen. American recognized that he was American scholar and he also disagreed with Chinese government communism. If only Brave Orchid’s husband had not cut off his pigtail he would have been said he could not be transformed into real American when he still remained Chinese identity, especially from the physical appearance. American would say that he was unassimilated and there would be reasons for the immigration official to trap him politically.

Instead of having a problem with the cutting of pigtail, many Chinese immigrants faced the problem with immigration officials because they entered America illegally or used false identity to join their relatives and friends in America.

The threat for those who could not show the legal immigration documents was put in jail or being deported from America. In other words, the deported Chinese immigrants would go home in such a bashful face without any outcomes to bring back home for the family.

Being in the rough situation, Chinese immigrants always tried to help each other and to protect their friends by giving safe information for the immigration office. There was an agreement among them to keep other immigrants' identity as secrets, as Maxine noted their statement, "There were secrets never to be said in front of the ghosts, immigration secrets whose telling could get us sent back to China" (WW, 1976: 183). They kept each other's secret carefully by telling them to nobody, even to their children.

Keeping secrets from their Chinese American children was not so easy as they imagined. Their children always asked questions for the strange things around them. Maxine in a very good question showed her astonishment about the flags in Chinatown:

"Mother, I heard some kids say there were flags like that. Are there?

What colors are they? Which buildings do they fly from?"

"No. No, there aren't any flags like that. They're just talking-story. You're always believing talk-story."

"I won't tell anybody, Mother. I promise. Which buildings are the flags on? Who flies them? The Benevolent association?"

"I don't know. Maybe the San Francisco villagers do that; our

villagers don't do that" (WW, 1976: 183).

The dialogue above told that Brave Orchid did not want to tell Maxine the things she wanted to know. Although Maxine had already known why the flags were flown for, she still needed the answer from her mother. Her mother would rather pay her attention to other things or keep silent to avoid her questions, including the question about what the villagers from their village did. Maxine finally found out the answer by herself:

"They would not tell us children because we had been born among ghosts, were taught by ghosts, and were ourselves ghost-like. They called us a kind of ghosts. Ghosts are noisy and full of air; they talked during meals. They talked about anything" (WW, 1976: 183-184).

Maxine's opinion above stated that the first generation considered their children had been affected by the Americanization, so they would be like the American did. Then the view caused Brave Orchid not tells her children the secret because she considered they had the ghost's characters. Because her children were born in America, she would know that they would conduct as American. American talked about everything they know and it would be the reason to hide secrets. She was anxious that Maxine would do the same thing if she told her the secret. The American habit was they talked during meal. It was in contrast to the Chinese habit. There was no conversation during meal in Chinese family. So, she thought it would be safer for her to keep the secrets from her children.

From the occurrence above Maxine could guess her parents' and other

Stockton Chinatown villager's behavior. It is what Maxine thought about them, hiding identity,

“They confused their gods by diverting their curses, misleading them with crooked streets and false name. They must try to confuse their offspring as well, who I suppose, threaten them in similar ways-always trying to get things straight, always trying to name the unspeakable. The Chinese I know hide their names, sojourners take new names when their lives change and guard their real name with silence” (WW, 1976: 5).

Because of illegal entrance, Chinese immigrants in Stockton Chinatown got difficulty to get citizenship. Besides, they just had fake immigration papers or false identity about themselves. It was really a matter when the Stockton Chinatown villagers heard a rumor about the United States immigration office to check them with their immigration documents. “Occasionally the rumors went about that the United States immigration authorities had set up headquarters in the San Francisco or Sacramento Chinatown to urge wetbacks and stowaways, anybody here on fake papers, to come to the city and get their file straightened out” (WW, 1976: 184).

Maxine describes how the rumor confused the Stockton Chinatown villagers, including Tom Hong and Brave Orchid. The discussion whether or not turn themselves in was held to solve the problem (WW, 1976: 184). Generally such a problem appeared because most villagers did not have American citizenship. They were blocked because they entered America illegally without legal immigration documents. Moreover, Chinese immigrants present were disliked due to their physical

appearance and characteristics and the opinion that Chinese made the field of endeavors for the white narrower.

Maxine illustrated in her book the discussion among the villagers. The solution for it became a dilemma for the villagers. Some villagers would rather go to the immigration office to make it easier and faster, but some of them disagreed as they witnessed the previous immigrants were deported out of America for their honesty to go to the office.

“We might as well,” somebody would say. “Then we’d have our citizenship for real.”

“Don’t be a fool,” somebody else would say. “It’s a trap. You go in there saying you want to straighten out your papers, they’ll deport you.”

“No, they won’t. They’re promising that nobody is going to go to jail or get deported. They’ll give you citizenship as a reward for turning yourself in, for your honesty.”

“Don’t you believe it. So-and-so trusted them, and he was deported. They deported his children too.”

“Where can they send us now? Hong Kong? Taiwan? I’ve never been to Hong Kong or Taiwan. The Big Six? Where?” We don’t belong anywhere since the Revolution. The old China has disappeared while we’ve been away” (WW, 1976: 184).

The dialogues above told about the villagers’ thought to be careful with the offer from the official because they could be deported as one of their neighbors, the

So-and-so family. Meanwhile, they had no more home country for China had changed into communist country.

Maxine quoted the statement by Tom Hong and Brave Orchid as they advised to be careful to American officers. They said that would be all right to say a little lie to save their lives in America.

“Don’t tell,” advised my parents. “Don’t go to San Francisco until they leave.”

“Lie to Americans. Tell them you were born during the San Francisco earthquake. Tell them your birth certificate and your parents were burned up in fire. Don’t report crimes; tell them we have no crimes and no poverty. Give a new name every time you get arrested; the ghosts won’t recognize you. Pay the immigrants twenty-five cents an hour and say we have no unemployment. And of course, tell them we’re against communism. Ghosts have no memory anyway and poor eyesight. And the Han people won’t be pinned down” (WW, 1976: 184-185).

According to them by taking advantages from the low memory to remember Chinese person by person and the resemblance among Chinese men, the villagers would be safe for a couple of time. Changing the real name and identity was the next alternative to save them. In the long term, they could take the San Francisco great earthquake, in April 18, 1906, as a reason why the Stockton Chinatown villagers did not have legal immigration documents when the official asked them.

Besides the earthquake, Chinese immigrants’ strategy was to use false name

and hide the real one for themselves, even from their children. As Maxine concluded from what her parents said above.

“They confused their gods by diverting their curses, misleading them with crooked streets and false name. They must try to confuse their offspring as well, who I suppose, threaten them in similar ways-always trying to get things straight, always trying to name the unspeakable. The Chinese I know hide their names, sojourners take new names when their lives change and guard their real name with silence” (WW, 1976: 5).

What Maxine had thought above made her wonder that she might not belong to the Chinese because they had hidden the real things from her. Meanwhile, her parents considered her as ghost-like that she wanted to know all secrets. Maxine thought Chinese were silent to keep secrets, even to their children, to avoid difficulties caused by the White’s prejudice and racial discrimination.

Those historical experiences above made the first generation of Chinese American thought that lives in America since the Chinese exclusion law was released, was not favorable anymore for them and their next generation. So that, they had to change their ways of living in order to be able to be accepted by the White American society, the used to be brothers. Those experiences also inspired the second generation of Chinese American to fix their life and characters because they would face the White society more in the future.

## 2. Social Experience

If it is seen from the experience above, Chinese American first generation was under prejudice and racial discrimination because of two things. First is their physical appearance. Chinese were known as men with Chinese traditional clothes and men with pigtail on his head besides their striking physical characteristics. The White thought they were inassimilable although they had changed the way they looked.

Maxine informed on her book about her parents' new appearance, Tom Hong had cut off his pigtail long time ago, also wore western suits, and lived the way white people did. On the other side, Brave Orchid had cut short her hair as American women did. She kept her Chinese dress in the cupboard and changed into modern gowns. Thus, the others Stockton Chinatown villagers changed their Chinese appearance. They had tried to assimilate in every way, except the way they communicate because they could not speak English.

Second, Chinese workers had different characteristics from the white workers at that time. Chinese workers were hard workers, docile, thrift, willing to do anything with low payment compared to the White workers. Their characteristics had put the White workers aside because the employers liked them. So, the White thought Chinese American were disturbance for their economic life.

The social hatred had brought many negative views about Chinese immigrants, as what Blacks experienced. Then it grew several sobriquets for Chinese from the society and mass medias, such as chink, gook, or nagur. Like Blacks, they

were described as heathen, morally inferior, savage, childlike, and lustful.

Being viewed from the eye of the White American society, Chinese made themselves as an easy target to spot and object to lead to prejudice because of their being large in number, their physical differences, their retention of their national dress, their custom of wearing their hair in pigtails, and their habits and traditions. Although Chinese used to be praised for their honesty, their thrift, and peaceful ways, the view then changed into servile, clannish, dangerous, deceitful, and vicious coolies. They were accused of being contract laborers (for taking away the White's land of endeavor). There was not a shred of evidence to show that the Chinese were nothing but Argonauts (people searching gold from Greek legend) of a different skin color.

Maxine described in her book the bitter historical experiences made an impact to Tom Hong and Brave Orchid's social life, generally to first generation Chinese American, as a result of the prejudice above. They behaved their selves more carefully and tended to pull themselves inside Chinatown, the safest place for them to live with their family. Chinese American first generation repeatedly warned their children to keep away from "the western people" (*sai yen*), whom they called ghosts or "the foreign devil" (*fan qui*) (Takaki, 1989: 235). Since the first generation considered that America was full of ghosts and ghost machines, Chinatown was the only place, which was ghosts-free according to them. Chinese American first generation found the definition of ghosts, that "Ghosts can be other people having different race, except for the Japanese" (WW, 1976: 66).

Yet, another opinion of Chinese said that ghosts were spirits of the dead people. Maxine described her family's view and habit about ghosts. Brave Orchid sometimes still questioned, "How do we know that ghosts are the continuance of dead people? Couldn't ghost be an entirely different species of creature? Perhaps human beings just die, and that's the end" (WW, 1976: 66). Brave Orchid questioned what ghosts were, but she believed that Chinese people had ancestral spirits. Even her family had a habit to ghost story time whenever they had spare time in between their busy working day at the laundry. Maxine reported the uproar atmosphere when they had ghost time story,

"When the thermometer in our laundry reached one hundred and eleven degrees on summer afternoon, either my father or my mother would say that it was time to tell another ghost story so that we could get some good chills up our backs. My parents, my brothers, sisters, great-uncle, and "Third Aunt," who wasn't really our aunt but a fellow villager, someone else's third aunt, kept the presses crashing and hissing and shouted out stories" (WW, 1976: 87).

The illustration above showed that Chinese family liked to gather and did their Chinese habits, in this case telling ghosts stories. This habit also could be a media to transfer the Chinese idea about ghosts.

Maxine described more that herself, her brothers, and sisters thought that everything could be ghosts, machines or other people they found in the streets outside Chinatown. So, they were living in a full of ghost country. Everything was ghosts,

except their selves and the Japanese. As Maxine wrote her opinion,

“...America has been full of machines and ghosts –Taxi Ghosts, Bus Ghosts, Police Ghosts, Fire Ghosts, Meter Reader Ghosts, Tree Timing Five-and-Dime Ghosts. Once upon a time the world was s thick with ghosts, I could hardly breathe; I could hardly walk, limping my way around the White Ghosts and their cars. There were Black Ghosts too, but they were open eyed and full of laughter, more distinct than White Ghosts” (WW, 1976: 97).

The Hong children’s imagination went too far about the ghost country. They thought they would never be save being around them. Because so many ghosts and ghost machines living around them, the Hong children had the most frightening ghosts in their version as children. It is as Maxine reported her childhood experience about the most frightening ghost,

“What frightened me most was the Newsboy Ghost, who came out between the cars parked in the evening light. Carrying a newspaper pouch instead of baby brother, he walked right out in the middle of the street without his parents. He shouted ghost words to the empty streets. His voice reached children inside the houses, reached inside the children’s chests. They would come running out their yards with their dimes. They would follow him just a corner too far. And they went to the nearest house to ask directions home, the Gypsy Ghosts would lure them inside with gold rings and then boil them alive and bottle them. The ointment thus made was good for rubbing on children’s bruises” (WW, 1976: 97).

Although it was not that terrifying in the real social life, the first generation Chinese American, including Maxine's parents, needed to warn their children to be careful. The White did not like them because they were different. They did not like their physical appearance, their characters, and their traditional culture. Therefore, in the book stated that the White had insulted them. They called them "chinks" or "gook" (WW, 1976: 52).

The name was annoying the Chinese American because it insulted them as though they had been low creatures and they did not deserve to be present in this earth. Maxine hated very much when her American classmates called her the same name, "And I have so many words-"chink" words and "gook" words too- that they do not fit to my skin" (WW, 1976: 53).

The insulting name was not only given to Chinese American, but also to other minority citizens in America. It seemed that the action was a reaction toward the White society's dislikeness toward the Chinese presence. Meanwhile for the Chinese American, the social experience grew a will to show that they also could be American although they had different physical appearance.

### 3. Economical Experience

Due to the previous problems, such as having no legal citizenship and their

mysterious characteristics, Chinese American were unwelcome and difficult to get proper job. Although some of them had got Chinese education, it did not guarantee they would get a better occupation than one in China.

Maxine stated that good education in China did not always bring luck in America. Her parents, Tom Hong (Maxine's father) and Brave Orchid (Maxine's mother) did not get job outside Chinatown. In fact, Tom Hong was a scholar trained in Traditional Chinese classic and a teacher in his village before his immigration. Meanwhile, Brave Orchid was a doctor who practiced Western medicine and midwifery in China. She graduated from To Keung School of Midwifery, a modern medical school in China. When they moved to America, high degree and occupational experiences for years in China seemed fading away to reach better future.

It was likely that Chinese education was not accepted to find job in America. White society needed not them become business partners. Conversely, they were considered as competitors. Moreover, Chinese American was classified as docile workers, willing to carry out hard job and only get low salary. If Chinese American wanted to start their own business, they got the capital after working for a quite long time.

Maxine described her parents' struggle to establish the family business. After being unemployment for a little while, Tom Hong changed his occupation several times. He washed windows, and started a laundry with his friends. Being cheated out of his share of the partnership, he moved to Stockton and started managing an illegal

gambling house for a wealthy Chinese American. Running illegal gambling business, he was arrested. He kept hiding his true name and found a new name during in prison. After he was free from the prison, he started his own laundry and a new life with his family. Brave Orchid helped her husband run the family business after knowing she could not practice the nursery skills she got. She changed her professional status for being laundrywoman, cleaning maid, tomato picker, and cannery worker (<http://www.cc.nctu.edu.tw/~pcfeng/CALF/chI.htm>).

The most popular business for Chinese American up to 1960s compared to others was laundry business. Every corner in Chinatown would be found laundry easily. This business included easy-started because the owner did not have to spend too much money as capital and the place needed also did not have to be wide as long as it was enough room to work. Therefore many Chinese started the business in many places. They used the opportunity to make a better living and found a way to save their family from economic discrimination.

However, the threats for the beneficial business continued. Too many laundry places, then, made the town look like slum area. It caused the government in charge planned to renovate the areas as well as made a reason to clear the city from annoying scenes.

Maxine wrote how the Urban Renewal tore down their laundry and paved over their environment for parking lot (WW, 1976: 48). It meant that her parents had to find another place to set up their laundry and to look for new customers. Finding new customers was difficult because it needed time to get back customers' trust.

Maxine recorded Brave Orchid complained, “Those Urban Renewal Ghosts gave us moving money. It took us seventeen years to get our customers” (WW, 1976: 104).

Because of the government policy to reform the city, many laundry businesses had to find new customers and it also made the business owners worked double harder if they wanted their business fixed.

Meanwhile, the wives, who helped their husband, worked and nurtured their children at the same time. It was what Brave Orchid activity everyday; “She could work at the laundry from 6:30 a.m. until midnight, shifting a baby from the ironing table to a shelf between packages, to the display window, where the ghosts tapped on the glass.” (WW, 1976: 104).

While working at the laundry, Brave Orchid took care of her children and protected them from germs coming from dirty clothes. She said,

“I put you babies in the clean places at the laundry, as far away from the germs that fumed out of the ghosts’ clothes as I could. Aa, their socks and handkerchiefs choked me. I cough now because of those seventeen years of breathing dust. Tubercular handkerchiefs. Lepers’ socks.” (WW, 1976: 104-105).

Working and taking care of baby in the meantime made her terrible. She wanted to quit and go back to China, but Tom Hong objected to it. Forcefully, she kept on working as other Chinese wives did in this country.

“This is terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away, she said. “Even the ghosts work, no time for acrobatics. I have not stop

working since the day the ship landed. I was on my feet the moment the babies were out. I never even had to hang up my own clothes. I shouldn't have left, but your father couldn't have supported you without me. I'm the one with the big muscles" (WW, 1976: 104).

Brave Orchid thought that it would be better in China and she would still have leisure time to visit her friends. In America Brave Orchid thought she worked so hard that time went very fast, but in China she would finish doing everything and there was still enough time to left do pleasure things.

"Time was different in China. One year lasted as long as my total time here; you could visit your women friends, drink tea, and play cards at each house, and it would be still twilight. It even got boring, nothing to do but fan ourselves. Here midnight comes and the floor's not swept, the ironing's not ready, the money's not made. I would be young if we lived in China" (WW, 1976: 1005-106).

From Tom Hong's experience and Brave Orchid's story, it is known that Chinese American first generation, in this case, had worked so hard, even they changed from one occupation into another in order to be able to survive in America. In fact, Tom Hong was arrested for establishing illegal business because he got difficulty to get proper job equal to his education in China. It also happened to Brave Orchid, although she had graduated from To Keung Midwifery School, that practiced western medicine and midwifery, she could not practiced her knowledge at that time, just because she was a Chinese American.

Tom Hong and Brave Orchid were representatives from other Chinese American first generation that had to work very hard to survive among the white society. Meanwhile the White society could not easily accept them for the prejudices leading to racial discrimination. Therefore Tom Hong and Brave Orchid, the first generation Chinese American, wanted to make a better life for their children's future.

#### 4. Educational Experience

Seeing from the historical, social, and economical experience, it would not be so easy for Tom Hong and Brave Orchid to survive. Historically the Chinese America first generation were hard to be accepted, economically they were difficult to get better job and better life for their family, socially they were considered as unassimilated to the white American culture, and educationally they were also considered as low educated people to live in America. The Hong family who represented the Chinese American first generation felt to have the same experience.

In order to sweep away prejudice and discrimination against Chinese American, Tom Hong and Brave Orchid supported their children, including Maxine as the biggest children and daughter, to get American education. Education was one of the ways for them to get assimilated to American culture. They enrolled their children to American school to get a confession from the white society in order to give their children enough provisions to their future in America. Also they made their children go to Chinese school in the afternoon after the American school had

finished.

That time only the second generation got the kind of experience, the experience that would change their characteristics different from the first generation. It was caused by the educational systems of each education and the treatment of the first generation toward the changes that emerged among the second generation Chinese American.

At first their parents enrolled them in the American kindergarten school, Maxine and her sister felt it difficult. Maxine and her sister had a problem with speaking because introduction and colloquial language among the teachers and students in the American public school was English, but she did not understand it at all. She felt she could not say anything and she just could not be sociable because they could say the words understood by the people around them or they spoke unclearly in English to other people. This is what she said about her language difficulty:

“When I went to kindergarten and had to speak English for the first time, I became silent. A dumbness-shame –still cracks my voice in two, even when I want to say “hello” casually, or ask an easy questioning front of the check-out counter, or ask directions of a bus driver. I stand frozen, or I hold up the line with the complete, grammatical sentence that come squeaking out at impossible length. “What did you say?” says the cab driver, or “Speak up,” so I have to perform again, only weaker the second time. A telephone call makes my throat bleed and takes up that day’s courage” (WW, 1976: 165).

It was Maxine and her sister first phase of schooling years. They felt that their English and their voice were too strange for American, too weak and unclear. So, they decided to say no words as what other Chinese American student girls did.

“During the first year I spoke to no one at school, did not ask before going to the lavatory, and flunked kindergarten. My sister also did nothing for three years, silent in the playground and silent at lunch. It was when I found out I had to talk that became a misery. I did not speak. I read aloud in the first grade, though, and heard the barest whisper with little squeaks come out from my throat. “Louder,” said the teacher, who scared the voice away again. The other Chinese girl did not talk either, so I knew that the silence had to do with being a Chinese girl” (WW, 1976: 165-166).

For Maxine and her sister their inability to understand English at first made the educational achievement not satisfying. The teachers had tried to help them and even called their parents –although they also did not understand English- to school to consult their daughters’ condition with them. As Maxine told her experience during the time:

“My silence was thickest-total-during the three years that I covered my school paintings with black paint. I painted layers of black over houses and flowers and suns, and when I drew on the blackboard, I put a layer of chalk on top. I was making a stage curtain parted or rose. The teachers called my parents to school, and I saw they had been saving the pictures and looked seriously too, but my parents did not understand English. (“The parents and

the teachers of criminals were executed,” said my father.) My parents took my pictures at home. I spread them out (so black and full of possibilities) and pretended the curtains were swinging open, flying up, one after another, sunlight underneath, mighty operas” (WW, 1976: 165).

For Maxine the experience during she did not understand English made her could not reach better educational achievement. Nevertheless, she did not give up and tried to learn English. She realized that English was important for her to study in American school and she could not be in the situation of being in vain. Maxine reported the progress she made in her English practice:

“It spoils my day with self-disgust when I hear my broken voice come skittering out into the open. It makes people wince to hear it. I’m getting better, though. Recently, I asked the postmen for special-issue stamps; I’ve waited since childhood for postmen to give me some of their own accord. I am making progress, a little every day” (WW, 1976: 165).

It did not come by itself. Her teacher helped her to improve her voice. She also realized that if she never expressed her ideas, her presence would have no impact to her surrounding society.

As soon as Maxine could improve her ability to speak in front of public, she concluded that expressing one’s ideas was the way to show one’s characteristics to other people around. If one were silent, nobody would really recognize him and their existence in the environment. She began to watch her Chinese classmates and found one most silent Chinese girl in class. She was the youngest daughter of a family and

her sister always protected her. She never said anything at school, except at home. Maxine teased her and tried to make her speak. Maxine was so angry with her because no words came out from her mouth no matter how hard Maxine tried to persuade her. Finally, at her anger Maxine said,

“And you, you’re a plant. Do you know that? That’s all you are if you don’t talk. If you don’t talk, you don’t have a personality. You’ll have no personality and no hair. You’ve got to let people know you have a personality and a brain. You think somebody is going to take care of you all your stupid life? ...Nobody’s going to notice you. And you have to talk for interviews, speak right up in front of the boss. Don’t you know that? You’re so dumb. Why do I waste my time on you?” (WW, 1976, 180-181)

Maxine felt very sorry if there were Chinese that could not speak their voices. Meanwhile at public school they were taught to be able to make personal achievement by using their brain. It seemed that she could apply well the system of American education’s emphasize, the shift of identity into her real life. She had changed from a Chinese silent character to American success in activity and work also to American worth of individual personality.

As the second generation of Chinese American, Maxine experienced the American education system emphasizing preservation, innovation, and dissemination of American values (International Encyclopedia of the Social Science, 1968: 528). Therefore, she would have shifted her identity into new characters compared to the first generation Chinese American in 1960s.

Besides experiencing American education system, as Chinese Maxine also went to Chinese school in the afternoon. She went there to study about Chinese language and history through chanting and memorizing. This is what Maxine reported about what her brothers, sisters, and her self did in the afternoon after American school, “After American school, we picked up our cigar boxes, in which we had arranged books, brushes, and an ink box neatly, and went to Chinese school, from 5:00 to 7:30 pm...” (WW, 1976: 167).

The materials they learned in the Chinese school were different from the American school. They really learned about Chinese culture in Chinese school. However, the teacher managed the class differently from the atmosphere of American school. Maxine illustrated the atmosphere in her Chinese school:

“There we chanted together, voices raising and falling, loud and soft, some boys shouting, everybody reading together, reciting together not alone with one voice. When we had a memorization test, the teacher let each of us come to his desk and say the lesson to him privately, while the rest of the class practiced copying or tracing. Most of the teachers were men. The boys who were so well behave in the American school played tricks on them and talked back to them. The girls were not mute. They screamed and yelled during recess, when there were no rules; they had fistfights. Nobody was afraid of children hurting themselves or children hurting school property. The glass doors to the red and green balconies with the gold joy symbols were left wide open so that we could run out and climb the fire escapes. We played

capture-the-flag in the auditorium, where Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek's pictures hung at the back of the stage, the Chinese flag on their left and the American flag on their right. We climbed the teak ceremonial chairs and made flying leaps off the stage. One flag headquarters was behind the glass door and the other on stage right. Our feet drummed on the hollow stage. During recess the teachers locked themselves up in their office with the shelves of books, copybooks, inks from China. They drank tea and warmed their hands at a stove. There was no play supervision. At recess we had the school to ourselves, and we could roam as far as we could go-downtown, Chinatown stores, home-as long as we returned before the bell rang" (WW, 1976: 167-168).

Maxine felt how miserable the condition of the Chinese American students there. The teachers manage the class massively. The students carried out every session activity collectively not individually, except for the oral exam. One student went individually to the teacher, while other student could find the answer in the book or discuss with other students. The students could be so disorder, in contrast they were so well behaved in the class or when the break time outside the class in American school. Maxine and her friends acted as if there had been no rules in Chinese school and because the teachers did not really watch them. The teachers used to take time to rest or sleep during the recess.

Maxine understood the differences between both education systems. Therefore, she could compare them well to take the lesson she needed in shaping her

characters.

### **B. The New Characters of Chinese American Second Generation**

The different experiences between Chinese American first and second generation had given different impact toward their reaction in associating themselves to the White American society. The experiences as mentioned above, are social, economical, historical, and educational experience.

At the beginning, the first generation Chinese American, represented by Tom Hong and Brave Orchid, went through a bitter historical and economical experience among the White American society. All of those were because their characters as Chinese workers. Tom Hong and Brave Orchid were docile and hard workers (WW, 1976: 106). Meanwhile socially, they were considered unassimilated because Brave Orchid, however, still practiced superstition (WW, 1976: 76, 121, 169-170). On one side, the White American believed that the coming of Chinese immigrants unpurified the White race (R. Takaki, 1989: 102). On the other side, White society thought that Chinese were heathen, morally inferior, savage, childlike, and lustful because they never got civilized education as American did (R. Takaki, 1989: 101).

Based on the experience above, education was the most striking factor that made the first and the second generation of Chinese American became different. The second-generation -Maxine, her brothers, and sisters- got American education. Automatically, socially Maxine and her siblings brought the shift of identity as the

goal of American education into their association with the White society (*International Encyclopedia of the Social Science*, 1968: 528).

As American citizens, Chinese American second generation were demanded to practice American values, such as self reliance, independence, hard work, freedom, personal responsibility, pride in the country and its political system, voluntary civic action, and trust other people (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1992: 86). Meanwhile, the Chinese education specialized more on study about Chinese culture, reading, singing, and reciting the lessons in Chinese (WW, 1976: 167).

In the mean time, as Chinese, moreover living in another country, the second generation Chinese American, as mentioned by Stanley Sue and Derald W. Sue, must have some good characters, such as becoming good sons or daughter toward their parents, conducting unquestioned obedience toward their parents' will, working hard, acting solidarity, and being thrift as ways to success, having a sense of responsibility for their younger siblings' failure, and believing in ancestors' spirits and superstitions (<http://www.modelminority.com/identity/personality.html>).

Those American and Chinese values could be found in Maxine Hong Kingston, her brothers, or sisters because they represented the second generation of Chinese American. If they were successful in performing the good characters expected by both the White American and the first generation Chinese American, Maxine and her siblings would be generation that were well-accepted by both society.

## 1. The Characters of Chinese American Second Generation

### a. Working Hard

Not only Americans but also Chinese American showed this character. For American, working hard was one of the most enduring and widespread value orientations in school (*Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 86: 1992). If they did not implant this value within themselves, they would not get the opportunity for being successful in their own country. Moreover, Chinese American workers were considered more diligent and docile.

It was natural for Chinese American to work hard; they needed to earn some money to make a living and to send the rest to their family in China. They would have been so ashamed if they had not sent some money because the family in China considered them living in poverty. Perhaps the family in China thought making money was such an easy thing in America. They must think that the relatives in America would be rich not so long after their arrival there.

Tom Hong and his wife, Brave Orchid, also faced dilemma whether they would share their money to the family in China or not. They disliked their family demanded some money from them. The family in China did not directly ask for the money but they would tell story first, how their lives was so miserable because the communist government had taken all family fortunes, attacked and burnt the house, also killed some of the family members. It was something confusing for the Hong family because Tom Hong and his family also lived in modesty. His wife also got to

work hard to fulfill the daily need. On the contrary, the family in China did not understand it and simply asked for the money gained by working hard in United States (WW, 1976: 50-51).

When the family had finished working the whole day, Brave Orchid sometimes complained to Maxine how exhausted she was. Maxine reported on her book that her mother could work at the laundry from 6:30 a.m. until midnight. When Maxine and her siblings were infants, Brave Orchid worked and took care of the babies at the same time (WW, 1976: 104).

Brave Orchid complained on how hard she had focused her time between working and nursing her babies, however, she said she could not stop working because doing nothing would hurt her body. As Brave Orchid complained to Maxine: “I can’t stop working. When I stop working, I hurt. My head, my back, my leg hurt. I get dizzy. I can’t stop (WW, 1976: 106). On the other hand, Brave Orchid felt she was responsible for her children’s life fare.

Maxine was also a hard worker; she inherited her mother characters, besides her environment demanded this character to survive. This is what she said to her mother about her character that she could manage her self: “I’m like that too, Mama. I work all the time. Don’t worry about me starving. I won’t starve. I know how to work. I know how to kill food, how to skin, and pluck it. I know how to work when things get bad” (WW, 1976: 106).

What Maxine said above showed that she appreciated working hard and she also expressed that she was hard worker. She realized that hard working was one of

the American characteristics she needed to show and American society would appreciate her as well.

b. Encouraging Privacy

Privacy is one of the most popular American characters. People all over the world know that American very much appreciate their privacy. They will give “a room” for themselves and others to be alone and to be peaceful by somebody else.

Privacy has a relation to personal responsibility to their business. Nevertheless, privacy does not mean that other people cannot interfere one’s business at all. It tends more to a kind of behavior putting forward a responsibility toward one’s actions and business without involving other people or disturbing other people.

American youths apply this value in their daily life. They do not want somebody else, even their parents or relatives, to watch them tightly or ask too many questions everything they do as long as they feel it right and safe to do something.

Maxine, her brothers, and sisters as American teenagers wished that privacy could be respected value at home. They had some secret places to hide themselves in the house. Whenever somebody knew the place, they would move to another place. Maxine and her siblings liked to be alone without any annoying questions and peculiar stare about the things they were doing.

For Maxine or their friends in their school, having a hidden place or keeping secrets from people were natural, also for other American teenagers. It was all right to do such thing. However, her mother, even her aunt –who just arrived from China-

thought it strange to see the things, which were not practiced by Chinese culture. Her aunt, Moon Orchid on the first time witnessed the behaviors of Brave Orchid's children:

“Her sons and daughters mumbled and disappeared-into the bathroom, the basement, the various hiding places they had dug through out the house. One of them locked her self in the pantry-storeroom, where she had cleared off a shelf desk among the food. Brave Orchid's children were antisocial and secretive. Ever since they were babies, they had burrowed little nests for themselves in the closets and underneath stairs: they made tents under tables and behind doors (WW, 1976: 128).

For Maxine and her siblings, the action was natural. Meanwhile, her aunt thought it was anti social and secretive. She got this view because in Chinese culture there was no secret and the communication was done in public. It meant that nobody could keep something for one self because other people needed to know. People in her village also spoke so loudly that everybody in the village could hear the conversation. She described how Chinese American in Chinatown communicated:

“... People shouted face-to-face and yelled from room to room. The immigrants I know have loud voices, unmodulated to American tones even after years away from the village where they called their friendship out across the fields. I have not been able to stop my mother's screams in public libraries or over telephones. ...Chinese communication was loud, public. Only sick people had to whisper” (WW, 1976: 11).

On the other day Moon Orchid wanted to know what her nephew and niece were doing when they were at home. She also tried to figure out her nephew and niece one by one from the features Brave Orchid had written. She finally recognized one of her sister's children, Maxine's youngest sister. With a great curiosity, she followed where she went and watched what she was doing. Feeling annoyed being attached by somebody, Maxine's youngest sister yelled and asked her to stay away from her. As she said to her aunt: "Stop following me around!" she shouted to her aunt "Quit hanging over my neck!" (WW, 1976: 132).

Meanwhile her aunt, Moon Orchid, just wanted to be nice and to get in a conversation with her, she did not mean to bother. Nevertheless, Moon Orchid's questions made her niece feel comfortable in carrying out her activity. Moon Orchid kept watching and following her around, while asking: "What are you doing?" Moon Orchid would ask. "What are you reading?" (WW, 1976: 132).

Her niece felt bothered and got angry with her. So, she did not tell her aunt about the things she did. She answered this way: "Nothing!" this girl would yell. "You're breathing on me. Don't breathe on me" (WW, 1976: 132).

From the occurrences above, it was clear that Maxine, her brothers, and sisters appreciated their privacy very much and they wished the elders to understand them. Meanwhile, their parents and aunt, who represented the Chinese products, could not understand this characteristic because of the different culture between America and China.

c. Enforcing Equality among Parents and Children

Maxine, her brothers, and sisters, who attended American education, desired very much to get equality at their home environment. They wanted to get the same treatment as the elders in Chinatown got, such as being greeted first by the elders if they passed in front of them or being appreciated that they also had their own opinion about something.

Unfortunately, Maxine's parents, especially Brave Orchid, still held on tightly to the Chinese culture. Tom Hong and Brave Orchid also applied those Chinese traditions in treating their children. In a time, Chinese traditions were not a problem to Maxine. On the other time, however, they became something bothering because they did not fit to be applied among American society living.

One of the traditions applied by Brave Orchid to Maxine was "cut her tongue". The tradition was done to a newborn baby because the Chinese said, "a ready tongue is an evil" (WW, 1976: 164). However, Maxine did not remember when the occurrence took place and what the intention of her mother's action as she told: "I don't remember her doing it, only her telling me about it..." (WW, 1976: 164).

Maxine sometimes felt very proud that her mother had committed such a powerful act upon her. At the other times, she was terrified because "cut her tongue" might be the first thing her mother did when she saw her (WW, 1976: 164). However, Brave Orchid got different intention toward the tradition to Maxine. To make sure what the function of the action, Maxine finally asked her mother as shown in the dialogue below:

“Why did you do that to me, Mother?”

“I told you.”

“Tell me again.”

“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 these things so I cut it”

“But isn’t a ready tongue an evil?”

“Things are different in this ghost country.”

“Did it hurt me? Did I cry and bleed?”

“I don’t remember. Probably” (WW, 1976: 164).

So, Maxine found out that her mother wanted her to be able to speak in many different languages. Her mother thought the skills would be very useful since, America or the ghost country required its citizen to be skillful.

Because of “cut tongue” tradition, deep in her heart Maxine believed she would be champion talker like her mother. She got a lesson from her American school: “If you don’t talk, you can’t have personality” (WW, 1976: 180).

In contrast, her mother had a different opinion. Brave Orchid thought Maxine talked too much. In addition, Maxine did not talk in the right time and it made her mother disturbed by her silly questions, and did not try to be nice and polite to the elders in Chinatown. Brave Orchid got angry with Maxine because she did not greet them as she passed in front of them:

“You turned so unusual. I fixed your tongue so you could say charming things. You do not even say hello to the villagers.”

“They don’t say hello to me.”

“They don’t have to answer children. When you get old, people will say hello to you.”

“When I get to college, it won’t matter if I’m not charming. And it doesn’t matter if a person ugly: she can still do school work.”

“I didn’t say you were ugly.”

“You say that all the time.”

“That’s what we’re supposed to say. That’s what Chinese say. We like to say opposite” (WW, 1976: 203).

In accordance with Maxine’s opinion, she had the same right as the elders. She deserved to be greeted first and she did not have to greet first every time they met. She wanted to be equal as the elders were as she witnessed in her American life. At school, the teachers or seniors, who must be elder, could greet the younger first. Even, Maxine thought American did not care about somebody’s physical appearance, as Brave Orchid said that Maxine was not charming, as long as a person could achieve well

Besides her wish to be equal as the elders, Maxine desired to be listened. Since in Chinese culture children must conduct unquestioning obedience to their parents, her wish seemed impossible to come to reality (<http://www.modelminority.com/identity/personality.htm>). Most Chinese American

parents still needed to interfere their children's fate in the future, such as what they should do or whom they would marry with.

At home, Maxine did not find that kind of atmosphere. Maxine felt a lot of improper acts her mother had done in treating her. She wanted to tell her mother all her guilt, but she was sure that her mother would not listen to her because her mother was certain that she was right. She expressed her dissatisfaction in her words below: "It seemed to hurt her to tell me that-another guilt for my list to tell my mother, I thought. And suddenly I got very confused lonely because I was at the moment telling her my list, and in the telling, it grew. No higher listener. No listener but my self" (WW, 1976: 203-204).

In conclusion, Maxine considered her mother just wanted to talk, but she did not want to listen to Maxine. Maxine could not get equality she desired at her house as she found in her American society.

Another Chinese tradition was about marriage partner. The first generation Chinese American, just like their ancestor in China, also arranged their daughter marriage, even they set up the marriage partner. Thinking about this tradition, Maxine disagreed. She did not want her parents to set up her or her sisters' marriage partner. She would like to be heard her opinion that she might look for her husband by herself. She did not like the Chinese tradition to take the young man home to see their daughter. She thought it would pose the bride-to-be in a great danger because the couple had not known each other. Moreover, a woman could not trust her live to a man whom she never met before. A perfect wedlock was when the couple loved and

understood each other. In brief, she told her mother she was against her or her sister marriage arrangement.

Likely not paying attention to her opinion, Maxine wondered why FOB (Fresh-off-the-Boat's), the young Chinese-men immigrants who just arrived to look for occupation, suddenly came and went out from their laundry. Maxine began to understand that one of them was arranged to marry her as she thought:

“I learned that the young men were placing ads in the *Gold Mountain News* to find wives when my mother and father started answering them. Suddenly a series of new workers showed up at the laundry; they each worked for a week before they disappeared. They ate with us. They talked Chinese with my parents. They did not talk to us. We were to call them “Elder Brother”, although they were not related to us. They were all funny-looking FOB's, as the Chinese-American kids at school called the young immigrants. FOB's wear high-riding gray slacks and white shirts with the sleeves rolled up. Their eyes do not focus correctly –shifty-eyed-and they hold their mouths slacks, not tight-jawed masculine. They shave off their sideburns. The girls said *they'd* never date an FOB” (WW, 1976: 193-194).

From the quotation above it is known Maxine that did not like their physical appearance. Moreover her Chinese American friends said they did not make any date with FOB. Thus, she showed her dislikeness through her attitude, especially when her parents invited them for dinner at home and showed him the pictures of the daughters.

“As my parents and the FOB sat talking in the kitchen table, I dropped two dishes. I found my walking stick and limped across the floor. I twisted my mouth and caught my hand in the knots of my hair. I spilled soup on the FOB when I handed him his bowl. “She can sew, though,” I heard my mother say, “and sweep.” I raised dust swirls sweeping around and under the FOB’s chair-very bad luck because spirits live inside the broom I put on my shoes with the open flaps and flapped about like a Wino Ghost. From then on, I wore those shoes to parties, whenever the mothers gathered to talk about marriage. The FOB and my parents paid me no attention, but when he left, my mother yelled at me about the dried-duck voice, the bad temper, the laziness, the clumsiness, the stupidity that comes from reading too much. The young men stopped visiting; not one came back” (WW, 1976: 194).

It seemed that her mother did not know that Maxine played tricks to get rid of the young men. She did it to struggle her faith that she could show she had her own opinion and choice about something.

According to Maxine, equality was very important in the relation between parents and children. She had learned that everybody had a chance to speak and to listen without differentiating whether they were young or old. Somebody, who got the appropriate opinion in solving a problem, would be appreciated as well as they could refuse their parents choice if the children thought it was not favorable for them.

#### d. Thinking Rational

Rationality was one of the significant values becoming a sign of a modern civilization. This sort of civilization measured things with logic reasons for the happenings in their lives. Therefore, the modern people were difficult to accept unnatural and illogic business. As a result, there would be a little space for mystiques and superstitions. Moreover, in the meantime, people all over the world considered America as modern country applying modern civilization.

Contradictory to the modern society, Asian world was very close to superstition within their culture and traditions. Their lives would not be completed without doing what their ancestors had taught them. They believed in the world of spirits, good and evil spirits, and the living after death would have something to do with the lives of the living body at the moment.

Maxine wanted to reveal that Tom Hong and Brave Orchid were so close to the immaterial culture brought from the ancestral land. She showed how they believed in superstitions and they would affect or determine their good or bad luck in their family life. Maxine also wanted to show that she absolutely did not agree with her parents' views, or she was forced to follow their command in doing such superstitions.

A wrong delivery, even it was medicine to cure, would bring disaster to the Chinese family. Therefore, at the time Maxine's family got the wrong delivery during their busy works, her father asked to bring it back the delivered thing because he knew it was unfortunate to them.

“We were at the laundry when a delivery boy came from the Rexall drugstore around the corner. Reading the label we saw that it belonged to another Chinese family, Crazy Marry family. “Not ours,” said my father. He pointed out the name to the Delivery Ghost, who took the pills back (WW, 1976: 169).

When Brave Orchid was angry at the wrong delivered medicine, she believed that it would affect her family’s recent lives, health, and future lives.

“My mother muttered for an hour, and then her anger boiled over. “That ghost! How dare he come to the wrong house?” She could not concentrate her pressing and marking. “A mistake! Huh! I was getting angry my self. She fumed. She made her press crash and hiss. “Revenge. We’ve got to avenge this wrong on our future, on our health, and on our lives. Nobody’s going to sicken my children and get away with it (WW, 1976: 169).

Contradictory to her mother’s attitude toward the thing, Maxine, together with her brothers and sisters, had a feeling that her mother would ask one of the to do something unfavor to them as what she had asked them to do during the next eclipse.

“We brothers and sisters did not look at one another. She would do something awful, something embarrassing. She’d already been hinting that during the next eclipse we slam pot lids together to scare the frog from swallowing the moon. (The word for eclipse is frog-swallowing-the moon.) When we had not banged lids at the last eclipse and the shadow kept reseeding anyway, she’d said, “The villagers must be banging and clanging

very loudly back home in China.”

Brave Orchid distrusted her children’s idea about moon eclipse; it logically had nothing to do with her belief.

“On the other world they aren’t having an eclipse, Mama. That’s just a shadow the earth makes when it comes between the moon and the sun.”

“You’re always believing what those Ghost Teachers tell you. Look at the size of the jaws!” (WW, 1976: 169).

Maxine felt so embarrassed to do something related to superstitions. Maxine were taught by her American teachers to believe in everything that make sense and reasonable to the sane human brain. Maxine sometimes thought that her mother’s command connected with superstition was unnatural and illogic, as what she had to do this time.

“Aha!” she yelled. “You! The biggest.” She was pointing at me. “You go to the drugstore.”

“But what do you want me to buy, Mother?” I said.

“Buy nothing. Don’t bring one cent. Go and make them stop the curse.

“I don’t want to go. I don’t know how to do that. There are no such things as curses. They’ll think I’m crazy.

“If you don’t go, I’m holding you responsible for bringing a plague on this family.”

“What am I supposed to do when I get there?” I said, sullen, trapped.

“Do I say, ‘Your delivery boy made a wrong delivery’?”

“They know he made the wrong delivery. I want you to make them rectify their crime.”

“I felt sick already. She’d make me swing stinky censers around the counter, at the druggist, at the customers. Throw dog blood on the druggist. I couldn’t stand her plan.

“You get reparation candy,” she said. “You say, ‘you have tainted my house with sick medicine and must remove the curse with sweetness.’ He’ll understand” (WW, 1976: 170).

Maxine wondered why she must bring back the wrong delivery medicine because her mother insisted it would bring bad luck to their family. Meanwhile she did not want to do it, she thought it was ridiculous and embarrassing to be done. She believed, as she said, ... there are no such things as curses.

All the quotation above is given a conclusion that there were two contrast views. The first was Brave Orchid’s beliefs that wrong delivered medicine was bitterness to her family and it must be replaced by sweetness in candies. Meanwhile, Maxine thought the happening was natural, where somebody could send something to the wrong address. However, it would not bring bad luck. It was just a natural occurrence and everybody might experience it.

One important thing for Brave Orchid was every single person in the house must be nice and look happy. If not, she must spell magic words to the spirits to sweeten the bitterness. So, at the first day of her sister’s coming, Brave Orchid was surprised that her children dislike the candies given by their aunt.

“It was very important that the beginning be sweet. Her children acted as if this eating were a bother. “Oh, all right,” they said, and took the smallest slivers. Who would think that children could dislike candy? It was abnormal, not in the nature of children, not human. “Take a big piece,” she scolded. She’d make them eat it like medicine if necessary. They were so stupid, surely they weren’t adults yet. They’d put the bad mouth on their aunt’s first American day: you had to sweeten their noisy barbarous mouths. She opened the front door and mumbled something. She opened the back door the back door and mumbled something.

“What do you say when you open the door like that?” her children used to ask when they were younger.

“Nothing. Nothing,” she would answer.

“Is it spirits, Mother? Do you talk to spirits? Are you asking them in or asking them out?”

“It’s nothing,” she said. She never explained anything that was really important. They were no longer asked” (WW, 1976: 121).

Brave Orchid came to a conclusion that her children’s attitude was not as normal as other children. Children generally liked candies and her children acted differently from normal human. Brave Orchid did not think that the children might dislike the candies. She asked her children why they acted that way and she never explained to them why she acted her way. She was too fast to determine that she had to communicate with spirits in order to sweeten their aunt’s days.

However hard she believed in superstitions, Brave Orchid never practiced them in front of public in the white society. She understood the effect because she was quite well educated in China. She did not like the common Chinese women, who would practice superstition in the street to cure her sick child.

“When my mother led us out of nightmares and horror movies, I felt loved. I felt safe hearing my name sung with hers and my father’s, my brothers’ and my sisters’, her anger at children who hurt themselves surprisingly gone. An old-fashioned woman would have called in the streets for her sick child. She’d hold its little empty coat unbuttoned, “Come put on your coat, you naughty child.” When the coat puffed up, she’d quickly button up the spirit inside and hurry it home to the child’s body in bed. But my mother, a modern woman, said our spells in private. “The old ladies in China had many silly superstitions,” she said. “I know you’ll come back without my making a fool of myself in the streets” (WW, 1976: 76).

At least Brave Orchid realized that superstitions were silly, although she still practiced them. Nevertheless, her children never believed in her superstition. Maxine, her brothers, and sisters thought rationally represented her Chinese American second generation. It was a sign that the second generation Chinese American had already belonged to the modern society.

e. Developing Self-confidence

Self-confidence was one of the American characteristics acquired by Chinese

American. Chinese American hard showed their self-confidence because they had already lost it. They lost it because prejudice and racial discrimination done to them in the past. To recover their self-dignity, they built again their self-confidence as a related value to show that they trust in their ability.

In the very beginning of her schooling Maxine did not master English. However, they had to have a high confidence to practice English in public because they could not shut their mouth everywhere. As they realized they had to communicate with the society, they grew self-confidence inside them.

Maxine, as well as her sister, underwent silent time everywhere they did or went because of their inability to pronounce English. They awkwardly communicated at school and at public places even when they had to answer the telephone, where somebody could talk without seeing the face, because of the inability to pronounce English.

“When I went to kindergarten and had to speak English for the first time, I became silent. A dumbness-a shame- still cracks my voice in two, even when I want to say “hello” casually, or ask an easy question in front of the check-out counter, or ask directions of a bus driver. I stand frozen, or hold up the line with the complete, grammatical sentence that comes squeaking out at impossible length. “What did you say?” says the cab driver, or “Speak up,” so I have to perform again, only weaker the second time. A telephone call makes my throat bleed and takes up that day’s courage. It spoils my day with self-disgust when I hear my broken voice come skittering out into the open. It

makes people wince to hear it” (WW, 1976: 165).

The silence brought up an affect that they could not get satisfying education achievement. They did not understand the teachers’ explanation and instruction because the language was English and their schoolmates only understood English in daily conversation.

“My silence was thickest-total-during the three years that I covered my school paintings with black paint. I painted layers of black over houses and flowers, and suns, and when I drew on the blackboard, I put a layer of chalk on top. I was making a stage curtain parted of rose. The teachers called my parents to school, and I saw they had been saving my pictures, curling and cracking, all alike and black. The teachers pointed to the pictures and looked serious, talked seriously too...”(WW, 1976: 165).

They were afraid of communication since they were anxious people would not like their voices in spelling something in English. Their confidence that they could make their language better also made their English improve. “I’m getting better, though. Recently I asked the postmen to give me some of their own accord. I am making progress, a little every day” (WW, 1976: 165).

In this case, Maxine’s self confidence to improve her English help her very much. By the age of nine, her progress in English enabled her to write poems in her new language, and though she was a gifted storyteller like her mother, she preferred the solitary task of writing. Maxine, who flunked kindergarten, became straight-A student and eleven scholarships that allowed her to attend the University of California

at Berkeley ([HTTP://WWW.CC.NCTU.EDU.TW/~PCFENG/CALF/CHL.HTM](http://www.cc.nctu.edu.tw/~pcfeng/calf/chl.htm)  
April, 17 2001, 10:40:27).

Maxine had already got she desires much in her life, except her desire to turn into a boy. She wanted it very much because “the Chinese did not admire a bent back: goddesses and warriors stood straight” (WW, 1976: 10) also she heard her parents said, ”There’s no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls (WW, 1976: 46). She had been kept telling that women were useless. However, she did not want to be one of those useless women, she wanted to prove to her parents and other villagers that she had the ability to do what men did and to prove that women and men are equal.

“I went to college-Berkeley in the sixties- and I studied, and I marched the world, but I did not turn into a boy. I would have liked to bring myself back as a boy for my parents for my parents to welcome with chickens and pigs. That was for my brother, who returned alive from Vietnam.

If I went to Vietnam, I would not come back: female desert families. It was said, “There is an outward tendency in females,” which meant that I was getting straight A’s for the good of my future husband’s family, not my own. I did not plan ever to have a husband. I would show my mother and father and the nosey villagers that girls have no outward tendency. I stopped getting straight A’s” (WW, 1976: 47).

Maxine had tried hard to be clever student and to be good girl for her parents. Nevertheless, her actions only made her parents thought that she must have a

tendency to please her future husband. She was disappointed at their negative recognition. It triggered her to revenge herself and other women in the society to appeal for equal ability for women.

The second generation Chinese American showed self-confidence as positive character that could help their wishes. It also made them reach and raise the dignity in front of the white society. The most important thing was the second generation Chinese American could show that their generation could survive and did better than the first generation.

## 2. The Characters of Chinese American Women Second Generation

The Chinese old values had cornered their women so that they could not improve themselves in every segment of life. Ever since Chinese daughter was born, they got different treatment compared to Chinese son. Only a few parents expected her birth. There was no formal education for women. The only education was how to serve their family and their future husband well. It was prohibited for woman to improve their talent's development. It dealt with a traditional proverb said, "A woman without talent is a woman of virtue" (Amy Ling, 1990: 1).

Although it was long ago, some negative traditional values were still applied and it produced Chinese women with negative characters. Even at the time, those women immigrated to America, they still bring the negative characters.

Fortunately, the second generation Chinese American women had experienced a proper education that changed their views. They no longer paid attention to negative values and views to them. It was American and Chinese American women got freedom to develop themselves without being shadowed by negative Chinese views toward them. Chinese American women second generation had become different from those Chinese women, who were pessimistic, silent, and dependent toward their society.

Chinese American Women second generation had built positive images as well as the Chinese American in general did. They were optimistic, outspoken, and independent in improving themselves. Those characteristics had relation to each other for being optimistic caused the Chinese American women dared to express their thoughts and ideas. Later, both characteristics helped them become independent to choose and determine their own decisions for their lives.

a. Optimistic

“Women in the old China did not choose” (WW, 1976:6), was one of the statements insulting Chinese women’s existence taken from Maxine’s writing in *The Woman Warrior*, her first book. The statement revealed how full of pressure the lives of Chinese women in the past. Their certainty about their future was getting faded away. They must understood that Chinese women could not determine anything for themselves, beginning from some simple things up to the biggest for women, the partner of marriage. Everything had arranged to them, without paying too much

attention whether the decisions for them would really bring goodness or not. Briefly, there was only a little chance to Chinese women in the past to live happily.

Maxine seemed to learn from the experience of aunts in China. Her aunt –her father’s younger sister-, as she wrote in her first chapter of No Name Woman, was the victim of the saying above. She was a victim of sex abuse of the man in her village. When she was finally pregnant, the villagers expelled her family and her. She was powerless to say the happening and she was too afraid to refuse the man’s commands.

“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.

Perhaps she had encountered him in the field or on the mountain where the daughter-in-law collected fuel. Or perhaps he first noticed her in the marketplace. He was not a stranger because the village housed no strangers. She had to have dealings with him other than sex. Perhaps he works an adjoining field, or he sold her the cloth for the dress she sewed and wore. His demand must have surprised, then terrified her. She obeyed him: she always did as she was told” (WW, 1976: 6).

Fear caused a blind obedience toward her aunt. Fear had tied her and she did every command under threats from men, her husband and the other man. They instructed her and she had to follow, or else, she would be hurt.

“The other man was not, after all, much different from her husband.

They both gave orders: she followed. "If you tell your family, I'll beat you. I'll kill you. Be here again next week." No one talked sex, ever. And she might have separated the rapes from the rest of living if only she did not have to buy her oil from him or gather wood in the same forest. I want her fear to have lasted just as long as rape lasted so that the fear could have been contained. No drawn-out fear. But women at sex hazarded birth and hence lifetimes. The fear did not stop but permeated everywhere. She told the man, "I think I'm pregnant." He organized the raid against her" (WW, 1976: 7).

According to Maxine opinion, her aunt just used to accept commands to her without refusing anything for her great fear of her life. In addition, she would have a chance to be still alive with her baby daughter if she could be optimistic in defending their lives. Unfortunately, she chose to become the victim of the cruel destiny.

The second lesson she got from her mother's sister, Moon Orchid. Her younger-aged husband to collect money in America abandoned her. Her visiting to America as the initiation from her older sister, was a medium of reconciliation with her husband. Facing the reality that her husband was married to another woman and would not accept her presence as wife, she became under unfavorable condition, that brought her to unstable mental condition and in the end made her be brought to the lunatic asylum (WW, 1976: 159).

From the very first time Moon Orchid stepped her feet in America, she felt pessimistic she could get together again with her husband. She got the same case as No name woman when she was threaten a great fear dominated her. Her fear released

clearly in her sayings at the moment she had to meet her husband by disguising as a sick woman, “That is a terrible thing to do. I’d be so scared. I am so scared” (WW, 1976: 145), “Oh, I’m so scared. I can’t move. I can’t do that in front of all those people-like a stage show. I won’t be able to talk. “And sure enough, her voice was fading into a whisper. She was shivering and small in the corner of the seat” (WW, 1976: 150).

Maxine believed that her aunt’s fear made her pessimistic before conducting any actions to reach her desires and it led her into big disadvantage toward herself. Maxine realized the very important thing in conducting every business was the great optimism to be successful.

Maxine was very proud of her mother’s story about Fa Mu Lan. She thought about the impact in her mother story toward her. The story gave her a hope and an inspiration to become the best and fight for what she wanted, such as a getting straight’ A student (WW, 1976: 45).

“At last I saw that I too had been in the presence of great power, my mother talking-story. After I grew up, I heard the chant of Fa Mu Lan, the girl who took her father’s place in the battle. Instantly I remembered that as a child I had followed my mother about the house, the two of us singing about how Fa Mu Lan fought gloriously and returned alive from war to settle in the village. I had forgotten this chant that was once mine, given by my mother, who may not have known its power to remind. She said I would grow up a wife and a slave, but she taught me the song of a warrior woman, Fa Mu Lan.

I would have to grow up a warrior woman” (WW, 1976: 19-20).

Maxine knew that Chinese American women, still the same as Chinese women, could not have a high expectation. Hence, Maxine, as the second generation Chinese American woman who disagreed views that women were low creatures and only became a weak wife and a powerless slave in the later time, took the different lesson from her mother’s chanting about Fa Mu Lan. She idolized her and was sure that she could become like her in the real life with a different manifestation.

The identification of Maxine with Fa Mulan was applied as grievances against a sexist legacy from Chinese culture and against a racist legacy from the dominant society.

“The swordswoman and I are not so dissimilar. May my people understand the resemblance soon that I can return to them. What we have in common are the words at our backs. The ideographs for revenge are “report a crime” and “report to five families...” (WW, 1976: 53).

Maxine saw herself as a woman warrior with grievance carved on her back. She knew she had to struggle as the woman warrior did to get her desire, that against the society demand (that was why it was stated grievance carved on her back). It was not easy to become optimistically being equal with men as it against the society demand. She struggled to show that women were not weak, women had ability to improve themselves because they had enough even more brain as men had, and women were optimistic they would have the same class in the society against the sexist and racist legacy.

Maxine was proud that “I am really a dragon, as she is a Dragon, both of us born in Dragon years” (WW, 1976: 109). It meant that she was optimistic that she was tough enough to successful women, as her mother had taught her and her American society wished upon her.

b. Outspoken

“Silence had to do with being a Chinese Girl” (WW, 1976: 166) rooted from the same view as “Women in the old China did not choose” (WW, 1976: 6) had born the negative characteristics on Chinese women.

Silence brought women to inferiority and the inferiority of women was imposed upon them by the traditional social custom and old Chinese view. Both of them were manifestation of hierarchic nature over men domination, considered women as unworthy creature. So, the behavior pattern of obedience and passivity were to be expected from Chinese women (Fairbank, 1965: 31). In brief, Chinese women were expected to be obedient and silent. Getting American education system force Chinese American women to express their ideas and opinion. There was freedom to speak and determine as long as responsibility was appreciated. Having a lesson from it, Maxine concluded, “If you don’t talk, you can’t have a personality” (WW, 1976: 180). She also learnt from her aunts, because they could not express their interests, they became victims, as a result they did not get the rights as women in their lives.

In the beginning in her schooling time, Maxine was totally silent, flunked kindergarten, and was given an IQ of zero. It was not meant as ignorance of English,

but a reason for reticence when she could not cope with people of another race, culture in a foreign language. Moreover, the situation at home was not conducive to speaking. She had been told that her mother had cut her frenum in order to be able to speak languages and pronounce anything (WW, 1976: 164), however, the result was just the opposite, she became tongue-tied and silent even as adult (WW, 1976: 165).

Maxine eventually found her voice and she found herself a long list of confessions toward her mother so that she would know the true things about her and to stop her pain in her throat (WW, 1975: 197). Maxine decided to be brave and let them out, although her mother rebuffed her, “I can’t stand this whisperings,” she said looking right at me...senseless gabblings every night. I wish you would stop. Go away and work. Whispering, whispering, making no sense. Madness. I don’t feel like hearing your craziness” (WW, 1976: 200).

She found her mother disliked her too much talking. She would rather see her working. However, Maxine still had some lists she had not already expressed in front of her mother and father. She wanted to be listened to and she wanted her parent to know her desires and ability. She protested why her mother always said the opposite about her. “Do you know what the Teacher Ghosts say about me? They tell me I’m smart and can win the scholarships. I can get into colleges...I’m smart. I know how to get A’s and they say I could be scientist or mathematician if I want...The only reason I flunked kindergarten was because you couldn’t teach me English, and you give me a zero IQ...(WW, 1976: 201).

Maxine was certain about what she wanted and she had worked hard for it. A

little disappointment she showed because her parents said the opposite about her. She had tried to be the smart student and get scholarships into colleges, but she received no compliments.

She told her parents that children needed praises for their good efforts. She could find the reason why her parents never praised her. They explained, “That’s what we’re supposed to say. That’s what Chinese say. We like to say the opposite” (WW, 1976: 203). Though she was disappointed, Maxine felt relieved, as she had said the long lists of her hidden desires. She had a great courage to speak and it was good for her mental health.

Related to desire for the future, the first problem for Chinese American women was almost similar to Chinese women. They had a little chance to determine what they wanted to be or what they had to do in the future. Silence would help parents determine their daughter’s future easily.

However, unlikely the Chinese American Women second generation would like to determine their own choices. Rebellion would come from them if their parents did not agree with them. A quarrel often took place among them because they had different opinions.

Maxine had determined that she got straight A to be able to get into college because her teachers said she had enough potential to be scientist or mathematician. She made hard effort to reach her dream. She became unhappy when her parents could not accept her plan. Her mother disagreed to her. “...What makes you think you’re the first one to think about college? I was a doctor. I went to medical school. I

don't see why you have to be a mathematician. I don't see why you can't be a doctor like me" (WW, 1976: 202).

Burst into anger, Maxine determine to be something her mother did not like at all. She did not want to be a doctor.

"I can't stand fever and delirium or listening to people coming out of anesthesia. But I didn't say I wanted to be a mathematician either. That's what the ghosts say. I want to be a lumberjack and a newspaper reporter." Might as well tell her some of the other items on my list. "I'm going to chop down tress in the daytime and write about timber at night" (WW, 1976: 202)

Her mother did not like her next choices either. She suggested her going to a common school for American girl at that time. "I don't see why you need to go to college at all to become either one of those things. Everybody else is sending their girls to typing school. 'Learn to type if you want to be an American girl.' Why don't you go to typing school? The cousins and the village girls are going to typing school" (WW, 1976: 203).

Maxine had courage to argue the best thing for herself because she knew her ability. In addition, she believed that she would be successful in the profession she liked. She represented the outspoken Chinese American women to defend her belief in determining her own decision.

The second problem for both Chinese daughters and Chinese American daughters was the marriage partner. The Chinese parents used to arrange the marriage partner for the daughters, just as No name woman's experience. No chance to reject

the choice for them, whether they like him or not, they love him or not, they had to accept the fate that they would be the wives of completely stranger man. Only few daughters could deny the wedlock by suicide or running away from home with the man they loved and taking a risk they would be erased from the family tree.

The No name woman, for her obedience to her parents, accepted her wedlock. She had never met her husband before and for sure her husband would leave her for uncertain time to America for earning money.

“When the family found a young man in the next village to be her husband, she had stood tractably beside the best rooster, his proxy and promised before they met that she would be his forever She was lucky that he was her age and she would be the first wife, and advantage secure now. The night she first saw him, she had sex with her. Then he left for America. She had almost forgotten what he looked like. When she tried to envision him, she only saw the black and white face in the group photograph the men had had taken before leaving” (WW, 1976: 7).

The marriage of No name woman and Moon Orchid was found unhappy causing suicide to No name woman and lunatic to Moon Orchid. Once again, No name women and Moon Orchid represented the victims under the pressure of men power.

Although she found many cases of such an unhappy marriage in China, in the United States the parents still arranged the wedlock for their daughter. Most of the daughters, however, rejected the wedlock although the consequence was not so

extreme as in China.

Maxine, as she grew older, learnt her parents arranged this sort of thing in disguised. She found a series of new workers at the laundry she suspicious because they each worked for a week before they disappeared. She knew they were young immigrants (FOB), the girls never dated them, and she thought her mother would arrange wedlock for her or her sister (WW, 1976: 193-194).

Just as any other mother, who offered her daughter to a man for her future husband, Brave Orchid informed her daughter's ability. It was very important for Chinese women, what they could do well to serve her husband, sewing, cooking, and cleaning the house. On the other side, Maxine realized she would not accept the wedlock and found a way to get rid the man from her or her sister. She tried to mess the meeting by dropping dishes when washing them, making herself looked dirty, and sweeping dust under his seat (this one signed very bad luck because spirits live inside the broom). In the end, her mother yelled at her because of her the dried-duck voice, the bad temper, the laziness, the clumsiness, and the stupidity that was shown in front of her guest (WW, 1976: 194).

Brave Orchid was trying patiently to give her daughter an explanation, how Chinese men and women were meant to be together in a bounce of a red string. "Though you can't see it," my mother said, 'a red string around your ankle ties you to the person you'll marry. He's already been born, and he's on the other end of the string' (WW, 1976: 194).

Maxine might not understand why women and men were meant to be in the

kind of bounce. She must think like other modern American woman to refuse a wedlock arrangement because she did not like the man. She did not always think that Chinese woman were for the Chinese men. She had her own choice, she would get married to the man she loved and fit each other. In her era, only a few girls could reveal their refusal and they their choice of the marriage partner.

After the refusal, even the plan to never get married (WW, 1976: 202), she got married to a white guy her classmate she met at the university (<http://www.cc.nctu.tw/~pcfeng/CALF/ch1.html> April 17, 2001, 10:40:27). She lived happily, because she was outspoken and she dared to speak about her choice.

c. Independent

Breaking a view that Chinese women only could depend upon her family or husband, Chinese American women second generation bravely performed their independence in front of their Chinatown environment, even to their larger society. They believed they learned the valuable lessons from the Chinese women's experience in the past. Those experience of being undervalued by men's greed had made the later women generation think they must release their future over men's power.

The consideration above was what Maxine learned after she heard and witnessed by herself the story about no name's woman' and Moon Orchid' experience. She noted that no name's woman's dependence on her village mate-just because she bought the oil from him, gathered the woods from the same forest as

him, and accepted clothes from him- (WW, 1976: 7) made her live in misery leading her to suicide. In addition, Moon Orchid's bitter life -being left by her husband, but depending on his money for living- led her to mental asylum. That was because she did not have enough courage to determine she could live without her husband or his money behind his betrayal because of getting married to another woman.

The experiences would be enough for them. The later generation could be sane enough not to depend themselves on the feeling of pity of man. Chinese American women second generation had been well educated that they would be able to afford their life.

On the argument with her mother about her future life, Maxine told her she could get scholarships to go to university to show she could help herself with her ability (WW, 1976: 201). Although her mother just wanted her to take typing school, like other Chinese girl, Maxine did not noticed that. She focused on getting the scholarships to go to the university. It was a good thing for Maxine because scholarships were only for the ones, who were able to show their good educational achievements. Furthermore, Maxine could arrange her future occupation and would be valued more by public after she got higher enough education in the university. The most important thing was she had a right to decide what she wanted to be (WW, 1976: 202).

Because of her hard work, she was categorized as successful American woman. Maxine could earn money for herself as lecturer, a highly appreciated profession because she shared her knowledge to her students. She also could write

several books to share her thoughts, experiences, and opinion to other. At least, she would not one hundred percent depend upon her husband. The later important thing from independence was she could perform positive characters as mentioned above.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **A. Conclusion**

Based on the analysis, which frames on the sociological and biographical approaches, then, the conclusions are arranged as follows:

1. The reasons of Chinese American second generation to change their characters.
  - a. Historical experience

Historical experience constitutes the Chinese American first generations' experiences, including Tom Hong and Brave Orchid. According to the experience, the Chinese American first generation lived under prejudice and racial discrimination due to the American society's anxiety for two things.

The first was the ultra-nationalism, the Chinese men showed physically by keeping their pigtail, the symbol of faithfulness to Manchu's dynasty and to communism as America's prohibited ideology. Although Tom Hong had cut his pigtail and changed his clothes as American, they still felt suspicious that he was inassimilable.

The problem of illegal immigration affected the provision of jobs because the illegal Chinese immigrants were over the immigration limitation and threat the White laborers. Every coming immigrant was suspected as

illegal immigrants and so was Brave Orchid. The whole village where they stayed were concerned one of them would be deported. White laborers suffered lose, as the Chinese workers were known as docile, cheap, and hard workers in comparison with white laborers. Thus, for this reason, Tom Hong and Brave Orchid tried to establish laundry business for no jobs available for Chinese.

b. Social experience

Social experience had a relation with prejudice of the American society. They considered Chinese American difficult to assimilate because the Chinese brought the ancestors' characters, such as servile, clannish, dangerous, deceitful, and vicious coolies. Moreover they were described as heathen, morally inferior, savage, and lustful creature, which forced them to live in marginal environments. Therefore, Chinese who lived in Stockton Chinatown, especially Maxine and her friends felt afraid every time White people came to their place. To release their fear, Maxine and her friends had some name for them, such as Garbage Ghosts or Newsboy Ghosts. For this time, Stockton society thought White did not understand their language and they began to feel insecure when the White understood what they said. That was why they thought it was better for them to learn the White's ways as well.

c. Economical experience.

Being forced to live in marginal environment, Tom Hong and his wife set up his own laundry business. Their occupation was considered low and not

proper to their education in China. Tom Hong changed from a teacher into a laundry man and Brave Orchid used to be a high-class status as midwife of the village. There was no other choice to survive because they did not get American education to compete with the American in the future. As parents, they gave Maxine and their other children American education so that better future they would get.

d. Educational experience

It was not possessed by Tom Hong and Brave Orchid generation. As a result, they wanted to give the later generation American education without leaving their cultural roots. Tom Hong and Brave Orchid thought American education would help the second generation to put their position as high as the White did, as well as Chinese education would meet them to Chinese culture. In addition, both educations brought Maxine and other children to the new characters, which adapted themselves to the White's characters.

2. The new characters of Chinese American second generation.

a. The Characters of Chinese American second generation:

1) Working hard

It was the character needed to gain "America's success" in the high competition to make money in that era. Brave Orchid implanted this value to Maxine when she was in her girlhood and the result she got the "American Success" from her work hard.

## 2) Encouraging privacy

It was the character valued very much Maxine, her brothers, and sisters because their parents applied the rules to control all children's activities while the children thought they owned their personal business. On the one hand, this condition made the children feel annoyed and uncomfortable to do their activities under parent's control.

## 3) Enforcing equality

Enforcing equality among parents and children was very important for Maxine. Meanwhile, her mother implanted unquestioned obedience to their children. She had a little chance to reveal what she wanted. She desired to be free in determining some decisions, especially about marriage partner, so that Maxine disagreed about her marriage arrangement to some guys she did not know and Maxine tried to protect her sister from the same plan.

## 4) Thinking rational

It was the influence of American education in facing the daily occurrence and the natural phenomenon and Maxine always believed in what her teacher said. This value was contradictory to her mother's belief in about spirits. American education taught the Hong children to leave the worlds of the unseen creatures because they were not really in presence and against human's sense.

#### 5) Developing self-confidence

Developing self-confidence was one way to reveal her capabilities in learning language and skills as good as her White classmates were. This character made her survive in facing hard competition of life in America in her later time.

#### b. The new characters of Chinese American women second generation

Chinese women used to be a low creature since they were born into the world. They were treated differently from Chinese sons and they never got proper education. Consequently they had negative images and never been looked as valuable creature. Their later Chinese women generation in America realized that women should struggle to get the best for them by performing positive characteristics the world wanted to see. Maxine had learnt a lot from her aunts' experience, No Name woman and Moon Orchid. They were weak and they suffered. Maxine knew she got to be strong to show her presence as Chinese American woman.

#### 1) Optimistic

Optimistic inspired within Maxine's soul because she learnt the Chinese women's experience. The hard life of no name woman and moon orchid because of the social burden made them realize that in America they had wider chance to improve themselves through education.

## 2) Outspoken

Outspoken was contrast with the old Chinese proverb saying, “Silence had something to do with being Chinese girl”. Meanwhile, American education taught Maxine to talk to show your presence and personal quality. She did not like to see her Chinese classmate became silent at school and she taught her to speak. The courage to speak was very valuable to them because in China women got no chance to rule their lives, including choosing their marriage partner.

## 3) Independence

It was a great opportunity for Maxine to show they could survive for their own. She showed her mother and her family that she had done everything without her parents’ help and it was a great attainment for her.

# **B. Suggestions**

*The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of A Girlhood Among Ghosts* is worth reading because Maxine Hong Kingston, the author had performed a neat plot as a combination of her real life and her fantasy about great Chinese woman warrior Fa Mu Lan. This literary work can be a very interesting research material.

Due to the previous researchers have conducted some research about Chinese feminism and Chinese American character building, the researcher recommends that other researchers, who want to take the same source of data, conduct the research based on different aspects from the book.

Some aspects which have not been used as research materials are the relation of Chinese American mother-daughter between different generation, the role of woman in Chinese American family, or the role of story-telling culture in Chinese American family education. The researcher believes that the developing topics from this source of data will enrich the American studies library collection and give more information to the students.

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