CHAPTER – 4

CULTURAL TRANSITION

The transition is termed as cultural transition when there is shift in culture and values. In the novels both Chinese and American cultures are focused. The women characters in each novel try to accommodate themselves into the present American culture. Their original roots are from China. Being Chinese, they want to have a better future for themselves and further for their own daughters. This is very well explained in the vignette of the novel The Joy Luck Club in which the mothers, the daughters are themselves, rebel a chance for the mothers to give them a better life than they had in China. The relationship between mothers and daughters starts with unbalance searching for their mother’s real pasts, as the daughters have to undergo a real change into the unknown land to find this our identities. To these second generation Chinese-American women, to know themselves is the motivating energy.

4.1 CULTURAL TRANSITION IN THE NOVEL JOY LUCK CLUB

Tan explores step by step the tradition of mothers and daughters from their childhood to their life at present. The best example is the propane in The Joy Luck Club that is significant because it outlines Tan’s ideas of Chinese Diaspora.

‘Then the woman and the swan sailed across an ocean many thousands of Li wide, stretching its neck towards America’. (Joy Luck 17)

The present age describes the story about a Chinese woman who travels to the United States in search of a better life. This indicates the cultural transition.

‘On her tourney she wooed to the swan: In America I will have a daughter just like me. But over there no body will say her worth in measured by loudness of her husbands belch. Over there nobody will look down on her, because I will make her speak only
perfect American English. And over their, she will always be too full to swallow any sorrow’. (Joy Luck 17)

The Chinese woman is compared to a duck. She takes with her a swan to give it to her daughter as a symbol of her ambitions and depressions that made her move to America” swan from her leaving only a feather to her. She is now left with only a feather and with no memory of the past for her long journey; years later, the mother’s draw their attention of an American daughter is fulfilled. Yet she does not give the feather to her daughter because she is still longingly waits for the moment, when she can finally speak perfect English and is able to fully express the meaning behind the feather. The mother wishes her daughter to speak only English, instead of Chinese yet she is not able to master the same language in order to communicate with her daughter. The Joy Luck mothers have a reservoir of life experiences they want to share with their daughters, but are faced with many incidents affecting both generations that prevent the deepening of their relationships. Both the mothers and the daughters’ state explain the life’s changing experiences that take place during their respective childhoods in China and in the United States.

The vignette in the starting of the novel in The Joy Luck Club is deeply moving and troubling. Tan explains effectively the pain of familial incomprehension the longing of the mother tongue’ and the unarticulated desire for generational understanding. But the geo-cultural gap between China and America creates such a division of social spaces that it immediately derives. The significance of the change in the cultural imagination with an apparent Chinese authenticity is focused.

The main character Suyuan Woo of the novel is the best example of transitions.

‘Your father is not my first husband you are not those babies’. (Joy Luck 26)

Suynan explains about her past life to her daughter Jing-Mei narrating her story that she had left the two babies behind in China, because she was unable to carry her our self, Yet, later we find that Suyuan tried her best to protect her children. She tied
some Yuan and jewellery under her children so that who ever found them will take care of them very well. She then proceeds herself for her next life undergoing the next transition to America. On arriving in America, Suyuan woo prepares herself for a cultural transition as well. Suyuan woo tells her daughter about the stories of her life that always have different endings.

‘She told me the same story, except for the ending, which grew darker, casting long shadows into her life, and eventually into mine’. (Joy Luck 21)

After coming to America Suyuan woo starts “The Joy Luck Club” above they have small parties hoping for a good future. Now Jing-Mei her daughter occupies her position in the ‘Ma-Jong’ gnew version of the Joy Luck Club in 1949, two years before.

‘I was born; this was the year my mother and father left China’. (Joy Luck 20)

Jing-Mei praises her mother saying, she did not regret what she lost in past. Instead she thought that there are so many ways for her life to make it getting better. Jing-Mai, from being an on looker of Joy Luck Club, shifts to the positions of a participant. Jing Mai tells that her mother always tells others that June will be a successful woman if she controls her temper, and use her talents in a right way. Later, when Jing Mai, travels to China to meet her sisters, she learns the meaning of her Chinese name, “Jing Mei”. The youngest sister who was supposed to be the of the others. Her physical transition to China also paves way for a cultural transition from American to Chinese.

As Jin-Mei realizes the importance of change and feels safe in china, where they stay. She also recollects the States of woman in China before the war as to how people gave more importance to the first wife and her children because in those days concubinage was practiced.

‘And now I also see what part of me is Chinese. It is no obvious. It is in my family. It is in our blood. After all these years, it can finally be let go’. (Joy Luck 288)
Jing-Mei compares her American life with the life now. She feels and realizes that her mother is not alive to see this drastic change in China. While looking at her two sisters, she sees her mother’s face in them. As the cultural importance Jing-Mei reveals about her mother’s destiny and desired wish to get her family returned and be happy as she realizes her mothers worth only after her death.

Even this is more focused in An-Mei tsu, when she learns and gets influenced by the cunnings of second wife of her father and her mother commits suicide. Her mother kills her own weak spirit so she could give An Mei a stronger one. Later An-Mei feels as to how miserable was her mother’s life, and gets herself stable.

‘A girl in China, did not marry for love, she married for position. I later learned, was the worst’. (Joy Luck 228)

The cultural transition is more focused in this case as An-Mei’s mother is victimized by the system for dishonoring her widowhood by becoming another man’s concubine and committing suicide. Her mother’s suicide makes everybody to reveal their truth and act accordingly. Her mother’s transition from life to death forces Wu-Tsing to reverse her and her children with the love awarded to the first wife, giving An-Mei a higher status within the family. On the day of her mother’s death, An-Mei learns to shout. She recollects the story of the turtles told by her mother who drink their own tears thinking they will have a good future. But the Magpies drink their tears and fly as happy birds. An-Mei also learns to change magpies like Wu Tsing and second wife. So that she can breathe a respectful life evolving into a strong willed woman.

In the same novel The Joy Luck Club another character Rose Jordon also reveals her views. Accordingly to her...

‘Chinese people had Chinese options American people had American opinions, and in almost every case, the American Version was much better. It was only later I discovered there were too many choices, so it was easy to get confused and pick the wrong thing’. (Joy Luck 191)
Rose explains about her life in America where she has too much of choices to select, and where she ultimately made a wrong choice. She also explains that there was so much to think about, so much to decide, each decision meant a change. Rose, after listening to her mother’s divorce and understanding her, develops a great deal of self confidence. She evolves into a strong women, she decides to meet her husband “Ted” once before getting the divorce.

An-Mei advices Rose that An-Mei’s mother was not able to escape from Wu Tsing’s home because that was “China”... they had no choice. They would not speak up…. She could only escape by killing herself, the only option available to Chinese women.

But An-Mei tells Rose that she is an American has the option to fight for herself and for what she wants, she can escape from the marriage and still be a strong independent woman with a bright future. Rose changes her attitude towards “Ted” and decides to face him and get her freedom. Her evolution takes place only after she derives strength from An-Mei Hsu.

When her husband arrives, “Ted” tells her to handover the divorce papers and also tell her that she doesn’t have to move out of the house right away, she could find a better place and then have the place. For which Rose replies very strongly.

‘I have already found a place. I said quickly, because, right then I know where I was going to live’. (Joy Luck 195-196)

After hearing this “Ted” was astonished by her answer. Earlier, Rose had been soft, leaving all the decisions to her husband to decide. But now her change makes him realize that she can also decide her own destiny. She tells him with an air of finality that she will live in this house in future. “You can’t just pull me out of your life and throw me away”. (Joy Luck 196)

By this it shows a vast cultural change from An-Mei’s mother to An-Mei’s daughter, Rose who evolves into a strong woman.
Coming to Lindo Jong, of all the elderly women in JLC, is significant for her sharpness of wit and her will. There is a cultural aspect that is highlighted in Lindo’s life-child marriage. Lindo’s family promises Lindo at the age of two to Huang’s family. From that moment she is betrothed, Lindo’s mother treats her as the (future) mother-in-law’s daughter instead of as her own.

‘My own family began treating me as if I belonged to somebody else. My mother would say to me when the like bowl went up to my face too many times. “Look how much Huang Taitai’s daughter-in-law can eat”. My mother did not treat me this way because she did not love me. She would say this biting back her tongue, so she would not wish for something that was no longer hers’. (Joy Luck 51)

Lindo Jong, in other words, describes as to how her own family undergoes cultural transition as her own family treats her as a part of Huang’s family. The relationship between Lindo and her mother is strong enough for Lindo to recognize the sacrifice her mother makes in turn.

‘Obey your family. Do not disgrace us, “She said, Act happy when you arrive. Really, you’re very lucky’. (Joy Luck 54)

Lindo undergoes the cultural transition promising her mother to be an obedient wife in order to make her family proud and also learn what others in Huang family expect from her as a responsible daughter-in-law. Lindo Jong descends as to how her life completely changes from prosperity to nursery at the age of twelve. Due to the family situations Lindo had to arrive in her-in-laws place culturally transforming from a spinster to a responsible daughter-in-law.

‘I was twelve years old, old enough to separate from my family and live with the Huang’s’. (Joy Luck 53)

As soon as Lindo arrives to her-in-laws place, she undergoes a transition from a pampered girl to a maid in Huang Taita’s kitchen.
‘Huang Taitai hurried me upstairs to the second floor and into the kitchen, which was a place where family children did not usually go. This was a place for cooks and servants, so I know my standing’. (Joy Luck 55)

It is here that Lindo’s character and personality evolve to suit the Huang’s household. It is here she learns the ethnic importance of a woman in China, as to how a female is treated in society. She becomes a lonely girl who thinks she has to create her own identity.

Apparently, Lindo is slapped by her mother-in-law for being a bad wife. “Bad Wife!” She cried, if you refuse to sleep with my son, U refuse to feed you or clothe you. So that’s how I knew that my husband had said to avoid his mother’s anger. I was also boiling with anger, but I said nothing, remembering my promise to my parents to be can obedient wife”. (Joy Luck 61)

Lindo however realizes that she has to overcome these difficulties as it is a part of their culture, but she also has to keep up the promise give to her parents. So from being a docile and innocent daughter-in-law, she evolves into a clever scheming woman, who wants to escape from the cage of Huang’s family. She finally hits upon a remarkable plan. When Lindo is unable to deliver a baby, the match maker tells Huang Taitai that she is too balanced in metal to have a baby. This turned out to be joyous news for Huang Taitai, for she liked nothing better than to reclaim all her gold and jewellery to help Lindo become fertile. It was great news for Lindo because after the gold is removed from her body, she feels lighter and more free.

‘They did not blame me so much, Huang Taitai got her grandson, I got my clothes, a rail ticket to Pecking and enough money to go America’. (Joy Luck 66)

Lindo explains as how she played a small trick and makes the servant girl to get married to Tyan-yu. Lindo becomes an independent woman, who now knows the aspects of life.
Lindo, who is free now, gets to start a new life, where she can decide for herself, Lindo merely doesn’t shift from China to America physically, but evolves culturally. Let deep within, her values always remain Chinese. After coming to America she learns that she has to pay for every information that she wants, became that was America. Lindo later learns that she has to tell lies in order to survive in America. In America she is employed as telephone operator. Lindo feels happy with the cultural change in her life. Lindo also reveals the pain that she underwent in working places, but after a get struggle she gets a job of making pan cakes. In the workplace she meets An-Mei, who suggests a way in choosing her husband Tin Jong, Lindo later realizes that this is not China. She can choose her life partner for herself. Here Lindo realizes the cultural change between China and America.

‘It was not like my first marriage, where everything was arranged. I had a choice, I would choose to marry your father, or I could choose not to marry him and go back to China’. (Joy Luck 263)

After her marriage, she gives births to three children, now she is balanced to give birth.

‘I don’t know what caused me to change may be it was my crooked nose that damaged my thinking. May be it was seeing you as a baby, how you looked so much like me and this made me dissatisfied with my life. I wanted everything for you to be better’. (Joy Luck 265)

In other words, Lindo knows that her daughter will be more American than Chinese. That is why she names her Waverly. She feels that, like herself, Waverly would definitely leave for another place. But even when she leaves, she will fake some of those strong, independent thoughts to the place where her mother started her independent life. Like all mothers, Lindo Jong faces problems with her daughter. Being an American born Waverly is more ignorant. She thinks that she doesn’t need anybody to depend on, even her mother. But gradually, she understands that her mother is stronger than her. Lindo Jong wants Waverly to be safe and be happy in her future, because she was deprived of
happiness in her days of youth. Here there are traces on the cultural transition bringing out the difference between Chinese and American culture.

The other character is the novel that is Ying-Ying St.Clair’s childhood in China is defined by the less of her identity, of the tiger spirit that she gives up and cannot pass on to her daughter Lena. As a child, Ying-Ying gets lost during the moon festival. When Ying-Ying gets lost, she is recovered by people on another boat. Thought it is a temporary separation from her family, Ying-Yung feels very insecure about her life for that moment. Ying-Ying’s maid makes her realize that she must be docile and plaint.

According to Chinese culture, a girl is not given the liberty to speak for herself. Here Ying-yung clearly describes the states of women in China who were supposed to obey their elders without the steeliest denure. The women in China were not allowed to think for themselves. They were treated as animals in the farm.

‘Haven’t I taught you that is wrong to think of your own needs? A girl can never speak only listen’. (Joy Luck 70)

She explains as to how her maid took care of her, by teaching her the basics of Chinese culture, Ying-Ying describes how in Chinese culture, they do not give importance to a woman who bears a female child. A woman is respected only when she gives a son.

‘I remember all these things. And tonight, on the fifteenth day of the eighth moon, I also remember what I asked the moon lady so long ago. I wish to be found’. (Joy Luck 83)

When she attempts to make a wish to the moon lady, she is traumatized by the revelation that the “Lady” is actually a man. She forgets her in the same way that she forgets herself. It is only during her old age when she remembers that her wish was to be found. Her dreams and wishes get shattered when she finds the moon lady to be actually a man.
As a teenager, Ying-Ying falls in love and marries an older man who eventually leaves her for another woman while she is pregnant.

The name effect is on her daughter Lena St. Clair. As Lena Claims....

‘She sees only bad things that effect our family. And she knows what causes them. But now she laments that she never did anything to stop them’. (Joy Luck 149)

As a girl, Lena thinks that there should be no quarrels between mother and daughter.

4. 2 CULTURAL TRANSITION IN THE NOVEL THE KITCHEN GOD’S WIFE

Describing the cultural transition in the second novel ‘The Kitchen God’s wife’, the main characters Winnie was born and bought up in China and immigrated to California. Later in life with Pearl, her daughter was born and brought up in the United States. Most of the story however is given in the voice of the mother, whose Chinese name is Jiang Weili in Chinese, where the family name comes first.

Winnie marries Wen Fu in China, after having a pathetic married life, she tries to escape from that and finally, joins Jimmie Louie in California as his wife. Her daughter Pearl being an American, is more Americanized as other daughter, Winnie finds it difficult to communicate with her daughter as she undergoes a cultural transition and the transition of attitude. She is unable to accept the ideas of her son-in-law, Phil kissing her on the cheek, and tries to install Chinese values in her grand children. Due to this barrier, Winnie develops a gap between her and Pearl, her daughter. She even wonders if Pearl is Wen Fu’s daughter. But later, she reveals the truth of her past undergoing a transition to a strong woman. Her daughter Pearl is the American born daughter to Jimmie Louie. From the beginning of the novel we find that she has no regard for Chinese culture. She is an integral part of Americanized culture. She marries an American. Her marriage to Phil further urges the gap between the cultures. Due to cultural differences these is a lack of communication, Pearl finds her mother funy, superstitious and demanding when Pearl
travels homeward after her weekend visit, she is characterized by a cause of guilt mind undergoes the cultural transition.

‘Mile after mile, all of it familiar, yet not, this distance that separates us, me from my mother’. (KGW 57)

Winnie explains as to how her thoughts and her culture is been transformed from China to America. Even though she was born and bought in China, where woman were not given importance culturally, she still claims herself as a Chinese because the culture of giving respect, the carving of herself she learnt only being a Chinese. After immigrating to America, she was culturally evolved into a dependent person where she gave more importance to her own self as in America they give importance to woman in all aspects. Explaining about the cultural transition in this novel, there is no much happenings, even though cultural transition transforms Winnie and Pearl equally Transform their differences as Pearl is an American born.

4.3 CULTURAL TRANSITION IN THE NOVEL THE BONESETTER’S DAUGHTER

Focusing on the cultural barriers in the third novel that is “The Bonesetters Daughter”, the story tells us as to how Gu Lin Xin’s ghost helps to guide Luling, her daughter and Ruth’s mother, out of the hazardous situations in China.

The novel focuses the women characters from Chinese or Chinese-American backgrounds. Flashing back to her childhood and adolescence, Ruth comes to realize that the mother-daughter relation is rooted in her identity crisis living as both American and Chinese; her Chinese mother’s silence and frustrations of living in a foreign country, and the miscommunication between her mother and herself. More important, is as Luling is losing her memory, Ruth recovers her mother’s autobiography that is representation of past memories written in back to the present America, where Ruth resumes the role as a story teller, where she confines the change in culture feeling her mother...
‘I am an American, Ruth shouted. I have a right to privacy to pursue my own happiness, not yours!’ (BSD 140)

As Ruth is a ghost-writer, she reads and edits various books. While Luling her mother gives her, her manuscripts written in Chinese and also her mother’s, Precious Auntie’s manuscripts. Coming to Precious Auntie’s character, she undergoes a cultural transition from being born as a girl but she evolves into a responsible son as her father does not bind her legs, as it as a tradition followed in China. Precious Auntie in the only child of her parents, she changes from a traditional Chinese woman to an dependent woman. She refused to have her feet bounded and learn to be an independent woman.

‘.... Let me do whatever a son might do. I learned to read and write, to ask question, to play riddles, to write eight legged poems to walk alone and admire nature’. (BSD 142)

Here precious Auntie explains as to how her father changed himself when it came to be his daughter, because he had seen woman’s pain, struggle and sufferings; he doesn’t want his daughter to undergo the same, that is the reason that he doesn’t bind her legs. Women in China were not much educated, they were treated inferior. But in the case of precious Auntie, there is a cultural transition and her father, Bone setter’s attitude changes that makes precious Auntie to learn to read and write. Coming to Luling, she explains that learning and writing Chinese characters is a different feeling to her that changes her completely to a Chinese though she is now living in America.

She also explains that it is difficult. Writing Chinese makes her think differently, feel differently, Luling was really different she was writing and painting, she was very patient, organized and more decision. Luling also asks Ruth, whether she would feel the presence of Precious Auntie guiding her hand, Luling wants to know what was Ruth’s experience about Precious Auntie. LuLing understands her position and status only after the death of Precious Auntie. LuLing is sent to an orphanage, where she experiences the transition in her life from a careless, irresponsible girl to a responsible young woman. The orphanage is a part of the Christian Monastery; Where Lu ling experiences a cultural
transition. The song that they are taught at the orphanage makes this evident.

‘We can study, we can learn, we can marry whom we choose. We can work, we can earn, and fate is all we lose’. (BSD 231)

LuLing learns to be more responsible as she has to go both roles to fulfil in the orphanage, - the role of a student and a tutor. Along with cultural transition comes LuLing’s religious transition. She changes from Buddhism to Christianity. LuLing outlines her own transition in the following lines:

‘After we finished with those statuses, there were no more idols to be changed to angels. By then, I too had changed, from a tutor to the teacher, from lonely girl to one who was in love with Teacher’s Pan’s son’. (BSD 241)

‘Forgive me that she speaks only English. It must be hard for you to communicate through her this way. But now I know that she can hear me’. (BSD 244)

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After speaking with Precious Auntie Luling asks her to forgive her daughter as she was born and brought up in American culture. It will be difficult for Precious Auntie to communicate with her. Luling also reveals to Ruth that her life had become sad due to which she tends to forget things as prescribed by doctor;

‘She thinks come to America everything so easy’. (BSD 143)

Luling explains about the Chinese culture as to how hard it is working in China, and how lazy the Americans and American culture is.

‘She has no one to talk to in Chinese of course her mind is little rusted. If you stop speaking, no oil for the squeaky wheel’. (BSD 147)

Luling goes to a doctor with Ruth for check up for her illness. Doctor advises to keep Luling always occupied with the work someone had to speak to her to make her lonely life into a better life. Luling talks about precious Auntie as to how culturally she is turning at the end of the world. Luling predicts that Precious Auntie was apparently saying that about a bone doctor and she would be happy for Ruth to know about it.

‘Why I have daughter like you” why I live? Why I don’t die long time ago? Luling was huffing and shouting’. (BSD 140)

Luling is annoyed with the habits of Ruth. As Ruth was Americanized she opts for some American habits like smoking which makes Luling feels ashamed because she compares herself with the other daughters. Luling compares the culture of both the countries and tries to make her understand that Luling came to America in search of identity for her and for her daughter is future. Luining also explains about the woman in china as to how she had to listen to elders, that is the culture followed in China, and also explains as to how she changed her attitude in understanding Precious Auntie’s views.
4.4 CULTURAL TRANSITION IN THE NOVEL THE HUNDRED SECRET SENSES

Explaining the cultural transition in the fourth novel “The Hundred Secret Senses” is a stay that is not in San Francisco and in a remote village of Southern China, Changmiang, never ending songs.

In the novel the concept of cultural translation is formulating a cultural identity for those who styles between two cultures. In weaving the old cultural references from both Chinese and American.

The main character Olivia in the narrator of the story.

‘But when I was a kid, I didn’t have strong enough boundaries between imagination and reality. Kwan saw what she believed. I saw what I didn’t want to believe’. (HSS 57)

Olivia is young, head strong. Americanized who poses the American identity in terms not just of cultures, but who actually belong to the Chinese ancestry. Being in an American family in Dal City, California, Olivia survives with a fragile home life with a self absorbed Caucasian mother who is careless with her family love. Olivia explains about her mother’s views on love undergoing cultural transition. Olivia’s disappointment in her older sister derives from Kwan’s others as a poorly assimilated immigrant to California.

‘Sometimes it irritates me. More often I become upset, even angry’. (HSS 21)

The antagonism suggests Olivia’s our doubts about her place among Caucasians, who voice racism through teasing and cruelty.

On the other hand turning of Olivia’s muddled thinking into an opportunity to contrast Chinese and American point of view. At a run in her emotional life, she suffers marital regrets and realizes how much her discounting of Kwan has hurt the balance less older sister. Olivia transforms from being victimized for Kwan’s treatment to be a normal
person, after learning that she is not responsible for Kwan’s ill treatment. The other main character that Kwan in the novel has a strong individuality and a gift for story telling frames the entire novel. Kwan’s American family courses her exasperating for clinging to Chinese belief’s and refusing to assimilate, yet spirits of the dead value her advice like that words of dear Abby.

At the age of four, Kwan watches Chou her mother, die in child birth from Jack, her father’s disloyalty. The new born child dies with her mother.

‘She reached out her arms as for she could. “Then all the water in her belly moved out as tears from her eyes she was so sad. ‘Kwan’s arms fell suddenly to her sides. That poor starving baby in her belly ate a hole in my mother’s heart, and they both died’. (HSS 14)

Kwan remains in the care of her rough spoken Aunt Li Bin-bin, called Big ma, a child abuse who forces Kwan to gather kindling for sale to neighbours and who threatens to send her away for talking too much. The slight deficits women’s unique role in picturising the silencing of other women.

Two years after Jack Yee’s death in 1960, eighteen year old Kwan undergoes a cultural change we can call it as a shift when she arrives in the United States.

‘It took Kwan a month to realize that the food they served there was supposed to be Chinese. Time did nothing to change her either Americanize her or bring out her resemblance to our father’. (HSS 16)

4.5 CULTURAL TRANSITION IN THE NOVEL SAVING FISH FROM DROWNING

In the fifth novel ‘Saving Fish from Drowning’ the main character is Bibi Chen undergoes the cultural transition after knowing the real character of her step mother, also understands the point of her step mother that gives her the realization of her real mother and also her real stand in her step mother’s point of view.
‘According to sweet ma, the relation my father had with my mother was very polite, as it should be towards ages’. (SFD 25)

The story follows the trails and tabulations that the twelve American tourists face when they embark on an expedition to explore a journey to China and Burma. This work is filled with ambitious thoughts narrated by a ghost who, like all of Tan’s women characters, is caught between two world’s part of both yet belonging to neither. The story is all about an ill-fated art expedition into the Northern shan State of Burma.

The world in which we are living are filled with words which don’t get to the heart of the matter but instead take their speakers on a journey to a place where heart has no layers of matters so much.

Amy Tan explains the significance of the cultural transition by explaining the contrast features of American culture and Chinese culture. Even though Amy Tan’s roots are from China, she always gave more importance to the American cultural as she grew up in America. She also explains as to how her life was totally transformed and Americanised as she was searching for her own self identity by identifying the real roots of her mother and her past, which helped her to identify her own-self and an identity to her own individual.