

**HYBRID IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CLASH AS REFLECTED
IN CHINESE-AMERICAN MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS
IN AMY TAN'S *THE JOY LUCK CLUB***

A THESIS SUMMARY

**Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Attainment
of *Sarjana Sastra* Degree of English Language and Literature**



By

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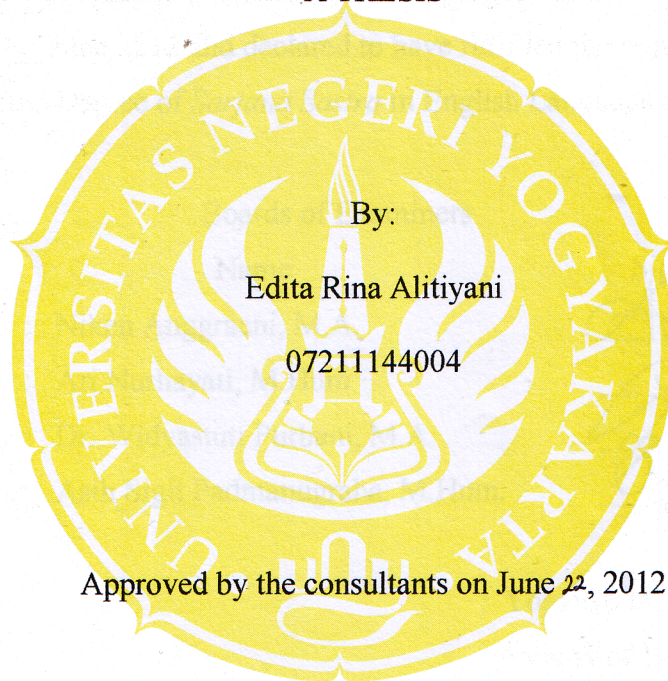
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APPROVAL SHEET

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INTRODUCTION

Every person belongs to particular cultures. Usually a person is influenced by the culture preserved in his/her home. However, when a person has to move from his/her home to a new place, he/she faces a different culture which requires an adaptation. This adaptation then might result in hybridity.

Hybridity is a creation of new transcultural forms in which new unique individuals are created from a cross between two cultures. These individuals then develop hybrid identity. In a group of immigrants, how the first and the second generation deal with hybrid identity can be different. The first generation immigrants are influenced by the old culture more, while the second ones are influenced by the new culture more. This cultural difference can lead to cultural clash.

The researcher chooses hybrid identity and cultural clash issue because the issue is still happening in many parts of the world. The examples are the Chinese in Indonesia, Latinos in Oregon, US, and Suni Muslims in Florida, US. The same experience also occurs within literary works. Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* is one of the examples, as it portrays the life of four Chinese-American immigrant families in California.

This research focuses on the ways the Chinese-American mothers and their daughters in *The Joy Luck Club* deal with hybrid identity and the cultural clashes which occur among them. As for the analysis, post-colonial theory related to hybrid identity is used. Besides, this research also uses some theories related to cultural clash.

Based on the description above, the research objectives are: 1) to identify how the Chinese-American mothers deal with hybrid identity, 2) to observe how their daughters deal with hybrid identity, and 3) to reveal the cultural clash that occurs between the mothers and the daughters.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this research, Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* is used as the object. The novel is analyzed using post-colonial theory, particularly about hybridity. It is said that in

postcolonial theory, hybridity suggests all the ways in which this vocabulary was challenged and undermined, not only about racial difference and racial mixture but also cultural cross-over and in-betweenness (Loomba, 2005: 145-53).

This concept of hybridity is elaborated with the issues of colonial past and present, displacement, and hybrid identity. In post-colonialism, the past and the present cannot be separated because hybrid individuals must live between the old and new cultures (Loomba, 2005: 145-53). They have to go back to their past to find their identity (Fanon in Barry, 1995: 192). Hybrid individuals also experience displacement, in which they feel homeless or 'out of place'. They feel that they do not belong either to the old or the new place (Ashcroft et al., 1989: 8-11). As the result, hybrid individuals have hybrid identity (Ashcroft et al., 1989: 8-11). The identity is a mixture of more than one identity. It is never complete, always in process, and constituted within representation (Hall in Williams and Chrisman (ed.), 1994: 392-403).

The concepts above then are combined with the concept of cultural clash which is the disagreement between two or more cultures with a certain value (Rogers and Steinfatt, 1999: 96-7). There are three categories of cultural clash which appear in Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*. These categories are rearing system, education and career, and partner selection.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative research in which content analysis is used to analyze Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*. The objects of this research are sentences and phrases from the novel *The Joy Luck Club*, whether it is stated in the dialogues or narration regarding the issues of hybridity and cultural clash. The data were collected through close reading and rereading technique towards the novel *The Joy Luck Club* in reference to the focus of the research. There were three steps applied in analyzing the data; they are classifying the data, interpreting the data, and making conclusions. Finally, to prove the validity of the data, triangulation technique was used.

FINDINGS

1. The Mothers' Ways in Dealing with Hybrid Identity

All mothers in *The Joy Luck Club* are Chinese-born. Since they were educated in Chinese way, Chinese culture roots deeply in their mind. Therefore, as American citizens, they still cannot erase their Chinese origin. This results in their hybrid identities. In dealing with hybrid identity, their ways are influenced by Chinese culture more. Those ways are maintaining Chinese origin, preserving Chinese values, preserving Chinese beliefs, becoming different from American people, and becoming influenced by American culture.

2. The Daughters' Ways in Dealing with Hybrid Identity

All daughters in *The Joy Luck Club* are American-born. Although Chinese culture is still preserved in their families, they were educated in American way and live in American society. This makes them develop hybrid identities. In dealing with hybrid identity, their ways are ignoring Chinese values, denying Chinese origin, having American way of thinking, ignoring Chinese language, and accepting Chinese origin.

3. Cultural Clash

In the field of rearing system, there are two cultural clashes. The first is the mother's strict rearing against the daughter's free will which occurs between Suyuan and Jing-Mei. In this clash, the strict rearing system which is considered attentive by Suyuan is regarded as an authoritarian way by Jing-Mei who prefers to follow her own will. The second clash is the mother's overprotective nature against the daughter's ignorance which occurs between Ying-Ying and Lena. Here, Ying-Ying's overprotective nature which is intended for Lena's safety is not understood by Lena who tends to ignore Ying-Ying's protection.

In the field of education and career, there are also two cultural clashes. The first is the mother's involvement against the daughter's individualism which occurs between Lindo and Waverly. Lindo is involved much in her daughter's achievement, while Waverly regards her mother's action as disturbing her

privacy. The second is the mother's expectation against the daughter's individualism which occurs between Suyuan and Jing-Mei. Suyuan has many expectations for her daughter's achievement, while Jing-Mei feels that her mother forces her to be what she does not want.

In the last field, partner selection, the clash is the mothers' approval against the daughters' personal choice. This case occurs between An-Mei and Rose, and between Lindo and Waverly. The mothers often disagree with the daughters' choice because in partner selection, they think about other things besides love. However, the daughters still insist their choice and marry the man they love.

CONCLUSION

From the findings above, there are three points which can be concluded. First, because the mothers were raised in Chinese way, their ways in dealing with hybrid identity are influenced by Chinese culture more. Those ways are maintaining Chinese origin, preserving Chinese values, preserving Chinese beliefs, becoming different from American people, and becoming influenced by American culture. Second, the daughters were raised inside the American society so their ways in dealing with hybrid identity are influenced by American culture more. Those ways are ignoring Chinese values, denying Chinese origin, having American way of thinking, ignoring Chinese language, and accepting Chinese origin. Third, because of the cultural difference between them, the mothers and daughters often experience cultural clash. The most dominant fields of cultural clashes found in *The Joy Luck Club* are in rearing system, education and career, and partner selection.

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