Research on Chinese American Women’s Literature from a Bicultural Perspective

Dan Zhu
School of Foreign Language, Changchun Institute of Technology, Changchun, Jilin, China.

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*Corresponding author:* Dan Zhu, School of Foreign Language, Changchun Institute of Technology, Changchun, Jilin, China.

Abstract

National culture is a geographically significant culture with the fundamental framework of the nation and the state. The Chinese people have stepped out of the original nation-state system and live in the United States. But they still have the original mother culture, and their long-term living in the United States makes them need to adapt to the American culture, so the Chinese American female literature researchers have cultural duality. The world is undergoing a global cultural transition. As a unique charming group in Chinese literature, the existence and development of Chinese-American female works have far-reaching cultural significance. Chinese American female writers express their identity and artistic pursuit through literary works. No matter whether they advocate "Americanization" or return to the traditional Chinese culture, their works can be seen everywhere in the face of the "identity" problem of Chinese-Americans like abandoned babies struggle. To this end, they strive to reshape the history of Chinese Americans and build a bright future for Chinese Americans. Their works play an important role in helping Chinese Americans rediscover their ancestors and enhance their national confidence and pride.

Keywords

Chinese American women's literature, bicultural perspective, cultural difference

1. Introduction

In the process of literary creation, readers and market are one of the important factors considered by writers. This is especially true of Chinese American women's literature. A Chinese-American woman writer who writes in English and distributes her works directly in Western book markets. Most of the readers are undoubtedly native Americans, and the difficulty of achieving success is predictable. What can catch the eye of Westerners, attract a large readership and push their work into mainstream discourse? Only by writing the internal stories of the Chinese people as minorities, by depicting the exotic culture of China, which is full of exotic scenery, can we have some interesting points and selling points. The conflicts between Chinese and Western cultures and the conflicts and entanglements between mother and daughter described by these women writers are exactly what Westerners want to see.

2. Cross-cultural nature of Chinese American female writers

Chinese people have always valued family, especially large families. From the beginning of their arrival in the United States, the Chinese spontaneously formed various psychological community organizations such as family meetings, clan halls, charity meetings, and conferences. This is an extension of the Chinese family consciousness, and also a product of the Chinese people's struggle for survival in the specific natural conditions and social environment full of exclusion in the United States. In the American society dominated by Western values, Chinese im-
migrants are in the position of "marginal people". They are excluded by the political, economic and cultural aspects of the mainstream society, which makes them prefer to live among ethnic group members to seek psychological comfort. So the emergence of Chinatown, a typical memory community, is a survival choice. It is a place for Chinese spirit to rely on, recuperate and communicate, as well as a kind of "home" in multiple senses, such as material, spiritual and cultural, to ease the tension and pain during the formation of their dual cultural identity and relieve the pressure of psychological contradictions. Moreover, in many ways, the continuation of Chinese traditional culture is even more comprehensive, thorough and stubborn than that of Chinese people. With the emergence of the big family reunion, the traditional big family complex ethical relationship, hierarchical family system and the essence and dross of Chinese traditional culture, such as attaching importance to family, paying attention to filial piety and caring for brotherhood, all appear in the land of the United States, and are also presented one after another in American Chinese-American literary novels. The purpose of Chinese American female writers' writing is not to carry forward the traditional Chinese culture, but to get rid of the fixed thinking in the American society, get rid of the stereotypical image of Chinese Americans, get rid of the white people's rejection of the yellow race, and make efforts to create a new era of Chinese American image. Finally, in the mainstream culture of American society, we will strive for the rights of the Chinese people.

3. Rupture of traditional culture among Chinese

However, the traditional Chinese culture has also been broken in the Chinese people, which is mainly reflected in the descendants of the Chinese people. Although they have yellow skin, with typical Chinese physiological characteristics, but they have been influenced and educated by Western mainstream white culture since childhood, so that their hearts have been "whitening". Many Chinese-American writers have repeatedly claimed to be American and write American stories on various occasions. This phenomenon itself shows that identity dissociation is still troubling these Chinese female writers (Wang Jianhui, 2008). In the Chinese-American literary novels, many Chinese try to escape the control of their own community and try to avoid the cultural background of Chinatown that makes their life meaningful. This approach will only make them lose themselves. Time and again, they found that no matter how hard they tried, no matter how well they spoke English, the mainstream society did not accept the Chinese descendants who had taken root in the western United States a century and a half ago, but always treated them as "marginalized". They gradually realized that the identification of American culture did not prevent them from inheriting the cultural essence of their ancestors, so they began to absorb "spiritual nutrition" from the ancestral culture. Under the influence of mainstream American cultural ideology, Chinese-Americans try to completely abandon their parents' Chinese culture and identify with the mainstream culture they grew up in. No matter how many generations they are of Chinese descent, how thoroughly they have given up their Chinese cultural identity; Or are they born in the United States, educated in the United States, and want to be American, but are excluded from the margins because of their "other" identity and appearance at odds with the mainstream (Guan Chunmei, 2008). After bouncing back and forth between the two cultures, they start to wonder, "Who am I?" and begin to absorb nutrients from their parents' culture. The two cultures began to coexist in these Chinese, forming what postcolonial thinkers called a "binary combinatorial culture" (Lu Haiying, 2008). Slowly they come to understand that this is the only way out in their quest for cultural identity.

4. Subvert the fixed image of Chinese women in mainstream American discourse

Many Chinese American women writers are influenced more by strong American culture. After all, their understanding of Chinese culture is through the distant memory of their mother and the layers of barriers between American culture, so it is understandable that there are misunderstandings, imagination and fusion (Zhang Lanzhen, 2007). In response, Tan has claimed that her goal in writing is not to recreate history, but to create art. From the perspective of cultural tradition, civilization is constructed in the course of history. A culture is like a continuous river flowing into the future, constantly receiving other tributaries and possibly diverging. A culture is also able to obtain inexhaustible vitality.

Every Chinese is a minority in a foreign culture, and they always construct some unique self-image in a foreign country as a response to the culture shock of the mainstream culture, that is, the foreign culture (Chen Aimin, 2005). Their response to the social environment and the mainstream value system according to the difference in the status of different, show as a defense of the self, the purpose is to keep the source of culture values status by the marginalization, the alienation in the multicultural context, as a counterweight to the dominant culture, give up the position.
of the marginalized, to mediate in the two cultures. Therefore, the multicultural background makes Chinese-American women have a balanced "duality" to adjust the distance between the two cultures.

Chinese-American women writers have placed themselves in the middle ground between two languages and two cultures. She belonged to two separate cultural worlds, yet felt separated from both. This dual perspective of local culture and other culture is contradictory. Chinese Americans improve their unique cultural identity by insisting on themselves, so as not to get lost in the conflict between the two cultures (Guo Jide, 2006). As Chinese American women are in the middle, it is unnecessary to separate the dual attributes from the inherent contradictions. Cultural cracks can be replaced by cultural Bridges. The influence of the two cultures does not exist as opposites, either you or me, but as a whole. Chinese American writers can walk freely in the dual cultural attributes, not to build a wall to cut off the two cultures, but to build a bridge between the two cultures.

5. Conclusion

Although the Chinese-American literature is the product of cross-culture collision and hybridization, it also shows its distinct personality and characteristics. Due to the special life experience and social status of Chinese Americans, most Chinese American female writers have dual cultural identity and vision, but they are a group with strong cultural sensibility on the whole. Taking their own state of existence as an opportunity, they focus on the survival of Chinese Americans in the cross-cultural collision and their reflections on their fate and choice of life from the perspective of unique life experience and objects. Therefore, their works not only describe the hardships and living conditions of the Chinese people who came to the United States across the sea, but also reflect the cross-cultural communication, collision and conflict between China and the West experienced by generations of Chinese people, and express their beautiful vision and infinite hope for the eventual integration of cross-cultural culture.

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