UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

Faculty of Philosophy

ICS-Programme

Nan Hu

The Hyphenated Identity of the 'I' Narrator as Chinese-American in *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Department: ICS
Author: Nan Hu
Master's Thesis: The Hyphenated Identity of the 'I' Narrator as Chinese-American in *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to study the construction of hyphenated identity and the representation of national identity in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976). Literary discourse plays a significant role in cultural studies because it mediates various cultures with regard to constructing a particular identity for immigrants in today's multicultural society. In this thesis, postcolonialist and feminist perspectives provide the theoretical ground and approach for researching the unequal power relationship between the authority and the subordinate. In Kingston's masterpiece *The Woman Warrior*, the 'I' narrator, as the descendant of the first generation of Chinese immigrants in America, has experienced a cultural confrontation between the dominant American white culture and hegemonic Chinese patriarchal culture. In such a circumstance, the narrator endeavors to break out of the double discrimination, eventually obtaining the accomplishment of constructing her hyphenated identity, Chinese-American. Moreover, in the process of constructing this identity, simultaneously, various Chinese and American cultural norms, values, conventions and characteristics are constructed in this fiction, which are actually the images on the projection screen as a strategic discourse rather than simple sketches of stereotypes.

KEYWORDS: Hyphenated Identity, *The Woman Warrior*, Chinese, American, Identities, Postcolonialism, Gender

1 INTRODUCTION

Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a girlhood among ghosts* (1976) is without doubt a literary classic, and it has become canonical in the teaching of Asian American literature. Reared in a Chinese cultural background, I am deeply impressed by many familiar Chinese cultural symbols, forms of behavior, and norms depicted in *The Woman Warrior*. This special encounter made me decide to choose it as the material for researching the identity issue in this thesis.

To begin with, it is necessary to have a brief review of the author and her novel. Maxine Hong Kingston was born in Stockton, California to a first generation of Chinese immigrants in America, in 1940. She has become a renowned novelist with the publication of her masterpieces, *China Men* (1980) and *Tripmaster Monkey* (1989). After releasing these three novels, Maxine Hong Kingston keeps working on fiction writing. Her recent concerning focuses on the theme of anti-war, represented by *To Be The Poet* (2002), *The Fifth Book of Peace* (2003) and *Veterans of War Veterans of Peace* (2006). The releasing of *The Woman Warrior* raises the issues of Feminism, Chinese ethnic minorities in the United States and studies concerning these issues worldwide. With its tremendous reception among readers and the academic world, *The Woman Warrior* was awarded the *National Book Critics Circle* in America. Without question, Kingston conquered the reader with her exquisite, humor and erudite writing skill. She is a prominent creative writer, whose fictions make a great contribution towards the fields of gender study and Chinese immigrants' ethnicity study, especially the field of Asian American literature.

In the 1960s to 1970s, the second wave of Feminist movement was given much attention in the United States in the fields of politics, social studies and cultural studies. Under this social and literary academic background, *The Woman Warrior* was published. This autobiographical fiction is entitled *The Woman Warrior*; since the protagonists are all women. Obviously, the gender issue raised in *The Woman Warrior* made this book labeled a representative work of Feminism. The most conspicuous Feminist feature is represented by the second story "White Tigers", which talks about the 'I' narrator trained as a women warrior fighting against hometown baron, a fatuous

emperor and becoming a filial daughter. It is argued by Huo Xiaojuan that the image of the 'I' narrator is portrayed as an Americanized independent woman fighting for her social status politically (2006: 70). In this sense, the portrayed image of the 'I' narrator reflects American identities interpreted as individualism advocated by the "American Creed" (2006: 70). In addition, this fiction also portrays many Chinese cultural customs and norms. For example, there is a short description in *The Woman Warrior* that "On that same day she bought at the dog dealer's a white puppy to train as her bodyguard when she made night calls. She tied pretty red yarn around its tail to neutralize the bad luck."(Kingston 1981: 78) It is perceived as inauspicious to have things related to the white color in Chinese culture. Chinese people always try to avoid it. This special kind of deed argues that the Chinese people are superstitious, if not over-generalized. However, it becomes custom from the cultural perspective. In this sense, this custom can be perceived as one element of identity for the Chinese people. In this way, the issue of the literary portrayal of Chinese and American national identities is raised in *The Woman Warrior*.

Moreover, it is understandable that there are plenty of depictions of the mediation between Chinese culture and American culture represented in this autobiographical fiction for the reason that the author Maxine Hong Kingston, as the descendant of the Chinese immigrants in America, is confronted with the subject of identifying her national or cultural belonging (Wang 2006: 175). Take the feminine manner displayed by these two cultures; for example, the excerpt below is the mediation of these two cultures depicted by Kingston (1981: 18):

> Brothers and sisters, newly men and women, had to efface their sexual colour and present plain miens. Disturbing hair and eyes, a smile like no other threatened the ideal of five generations living under one roof. To focus blurs, 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 friendships out across the fields. I have not been able to stop my mother's screams in public libraries or over telephones. Walking erect (knees straight, toes pointed forward, not pigeon-toed, which is Chinese-feminine) and speaking in an inaudible voice, I have tried to turn myself American-feminine. Chinese communication was loud, public. Only sick people had to whisper. But at the dinner table, where the family members came nearest one another, no one could talk, not the outcasts nor any eaters. Every word that falls

> from the mouth is a coin lost. Silently they gave and accepted food with both hands.

The portrayal of the Chinese immigrants' daily life in America above shows the cultural variations in terms of talking and walking ways. The main idea of this illustration is that the 'I' narrator cannot bear the relatively rude communication style such as her mother speaks in public. There is a Chinese idiom saying that "no speaking when eating and no talking when going to sleep", implying that Chinese are silent or demure when they are eating, which is perceived as Chinese table manners (this is confined to family, while table manners at a banquet are totally the opposite to this). Thus, the 'I' narrator experiences the demure at dinner table. By contrast, her villagers speak loudly, which is perceived as impolite in American culture. In this circumstance, the collisions of American and Chinese cultures require the mediation which it is necessary for the 'I' narrator, who is influenced by these two cultures to make. However, this small example demonstrates the inevitable cultural mediation represented in *The Woman Warrior*. The 'I' narrator narrates that she attempts to turn herself into "American-feminine", which indicates that she cannot accept the Chinese public manner in some occasions. The Chinese feminine manner embarrasses her. The in-between situation impels her to make a choice, although as someone educated in two cultures, the decision-making is not easy. Apparently, with much more exposure of the collision and mediation between Chinese and American cultures in *The Woman Warrior* actually, the protagonist 'I' narrator attempts to find her position in relation to her affiliation to both the Chinese and American cultures. Therefore, ethnic or cultural identity concerning the 'I' narrator is raised. These two small examples show the issues raised by *The Woman Warrior* which this thesis will to explore.

1.1 Research Question

Before dealing with the research aims of this thesis, it is necessary to explain explicitly the term "national identity", which is employed in two connotations in this thesis. On the grounds of social psychology, the notion of identity can be used in two dimensions such as the individual identity and the collective identity. For instance, gender identity

is perceived as individual identity. The usage of "national identity" in this thesis means either individual identity or collective identity. Firstly, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), "hyphenated" can be applied to a person (or, by extension, their activities), whose nationality is designated by a hyphen form, such as Anglo-American, Irish-American. Apparently, hyphenated identity refers to individuals' national identification. In this sense, the hyphenated identity designates the connotation of national identity as individual identity.

However, national identity also refers to the identity of a group, which is collective identity, suggested by Ohad David and Daniel Bar-Tal (2009: 356). Therefore, when national identity designates the collective connotation, it means plural because there are various features and elements of national identities. According to David and Bar-Tal (2009: 356), "many national identities' origins are rooted in pre-modern ethnic identities, which are defined largely by their common name, ancestry myth, and historical memories". Moreover, they (2009: 356) suggest:

> The identity features are primarily social, cultural and symbolic components which can be identified over long periods in the annals of the nation, even though on some occasions they were forgotten and then reemerged to become functional in shaping the identity.

Regardless of the situations whose significance and meaning attributed to them by the members of the nation changed, sometimes even dramatically, the feature of identity can be "characterized as an identity definer which is rooted in the ethnic past, as members of the nation employ them in the present to describe their identity" (David & Bar-Tal 2009: 356). Then, it is justified to state that national identity designates multiple contents including culture, common language, collective memory etc. Furthermore, the meaning of "nation" employed in this thesis refers to people as aggregated in Joep Leerssen's imagological sense, which demonstrates that nation is characterized and mutually distinguished by its "culture": "their mores, manners and customs, and by their purported character, outlook and mentality" (2007: 380). Thus, the collective connotation designating national identity has many definers confined to culture rather than its prevalent political connotation such as national capital, the national football and the national debt (Leerssen 2007: 378). In order to distinguish between its connotations

and usage, the hyphenated identity refers to the individual national identity, while the national identities designate plural meanings such as shared beliefs, customs, norms, values, conventions and pursuits of a nation. Therefore, phrases such as "Chinese identities" and "American identities" demonstrating national identities in the plural will be used in this thesis as well as "Chineseness" and "Americanness".

Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, the subject of this thesis, is a multi-faceted literary work labeled as Feminist for its rebuke that women in Old China are oppressed by the patriarchal family and society. Moreover, with numerous exposures of Chinese cultures and Chinese immigrants' problems in America, this book is also commented on as a "Chinese" work (Whalen-Bridge 2006: 80) rather than an "American" fiction. Whatever label is attached to *The Woman Warrior*, according to the examples presented in previous part, the identity issue of the 'I' narrator is raised, while depictions of Chinese and American national cultures, conventions and values are also displayed. In order to have a critical analysis of the identity issue raised in *The Woman Warrior*, the explicit explanation of the relationship between the 'I' narrator's individual identity issue and the depictions of Chinese and American identities is of vital significance. The search for cultural or national belonging by the 'I' narrator is actually, to a certain extent, dependent on the observations on the two cultures and to what extent the 'I' narrator has been assimilated into these two nations (which is in an imagological sense, designating people as cultural aggregated). This means that in the process of constructing her own cultural or national belonging, understandably, the 'I' narrator portrays her "vision" of these two cultures and national characteristics, which means that the Chinese and American cultural representation in *The Woman Warrior* are primarily through the "eye" of the 'I' narrator. Therefore, I propose that the 'I' narrator constructs her hyphenated identity under the circumstances of the collision of Chinese and American cultures.

Moreover, this thesis is concerned with the related subordinate issues which are the literary representation of Chinese and American national identities. Since the portrayal of Chinese and American identities are in the perspectives of the 'I' narrator, I propose that the literary representation of Chinese and American identities in *The Woman Warrior* is inclined to be partial. Simultaneously, it is inclined to stereotype and rigidify

the images of these two nations to some extent, but is helpful for critically studying the two nations' characteristics, cultures and social forms, if in reference to the corresponding and objective literatures. In short, the aim of this thesis is to examine how the 'I' narrator constructs her hyphenated identity and how Chinese and American identities are represented in it.

1.2 Research Method

The previous discussion has pointed out the main focus of this thesis. Under the core emphasis is the subordinate issue that the literary representation of Chinese and American identities is interwoven with the theme of the 'I' narrator's hyphenated identity formation. To account for the two aims of this thesis, the research method employed is firstly the postcolonial approach with the incorporation of a feminist view to analyze the 'I' narrator's hyphenated identity; and secondly, the related issue of two national identities will be researched with the application of the imagological approach.

Firstly, in the analysis of the 'I' narrator's hyphenated identity, the application of the postcolonial approach seems appropriate. The postcolonial approach mainly interrogates the uneven power relationship between the dominant groups and the subaltern groups. Homi K. Bahbah points out the concept of "ambivalence" of hybridity, which becomes important theoretical basis for analyzing how the subaltern groups articulate their own identities when they are oppressed by the powerful colonial power and compelled to accept the authoritative identities (2004: 1167). *The Woman Warrior*, as the representative Asian American fiction, reveals many problems with which the ethnic Chinese minorities are confronted, in particular, relating to Chinese women. It is evident that the 'I' narrator, as the member of the subaltern cultural group, attempts to break out of the life of in-between and to get rid of the "unspeakable" dilemma. The postcolonial perspectives on hybridity will be discussed as one part of the theoretical grounds for the notion of hyphenated identity. Moreover, the postcolonial approach will be applied to give an intensively analysis of how the 'I' narrator constructs her hyphenated identity in order to break the hegemony of white cultural supremacy and Chinese patriarchal culture. Moreover, in Old China, the Chinese people who were influenced deeply by

Confucian philosophy, conformed to *wu lun* (five constant virtues) rigorously, which are perceived as the five basic relationships. These basic relationships are "ruler-subject, father-son, older brother-younger brother, husband-wife, and senior friend-junior friend" (Hofstede 1991: 165). Obviously, this illustration reveals that the Chinese women in feudal China played a very inferior role both in family and society, which conforms to the patriarchal hierarchy. Thus feminist theory which aims at articulating the unequal position between women and men is indispensable for analyzing Chinese patriarchal convention and the portrayal of the unfair treatment of women in *The Woman Warrior*. Furthermore, feminist viewpoints will be applied to undergird the analysis of how the 'I' narrator articulates her hyphenated identity with establishment of the new "self-image", which subverts the traditional Chinese images of women.

Secondly, Manfred Beller (2007: 7) states that "Literary- and more particularly, comparatist- imagology studies the origin and function of characteristics of other countries and peoples, as expressed textually, particularly in the way in which they are presented in works of literature, plays, poems, travel books and essays." In Beller's sense, the study of national identity is definitely feasible as representation in literary works through the method of imagology. Specifically speaking, the above illustration of the imagology as a study of the cultural construction and literary representation of national characters provides the methodological foundation for analyzing the Chinese and American national identities constructed in *The Woman Warrior*. Accordingly, in the theoretical part, the images concerning the Chinese in the 1930s and 1940s and the images of Americans in 1940s to 1970s will be given in-depth investigations on the basis of literary and cultural discourses. Based on the peculiarity of national identities in certain chronological period, it is necessary to mention that prominent Chinese novelist Lin Yutang with his book *My Country and My People* provides crucial assessments for theoretical discussion about the Chinese national cultures, social forms, values and conventions in the 1930s. According to Jia Wenshan, Lin Yutang attempts to modernize Chinese behavior and cultures in order to save the whole nation from the chaotic political situation through the study of Chinese national characteristics (2001: 179). The publication of *My Country and My People* in 1935 gained high praise among American readers. This book demonstrated many other Chinese images than the previous

conservative and obsolete images, perceived by Westerners (Wang 2007: 47). More significantly, this book gave us relatively objective comments on Chinese identities. Therefore, in this thesis, discussion about the "Chineseness" will make reference to Lin Yutang's observations and comments. Then, in the analysis chapter, the selected excerpts depicting the Chinese and American national values, conventions, attitudes and characteristics from *The Woman Warrior* will be discussed to elucidate how these depictions unfold the Chinese and American national identities in *The Woman Warrior*.

1.3 Material and Plot Summaries

The autobiographical fiction *The Woman Warrior* is the primary material to analyze for this thesis. In the analysis chapter, excerpts drawn out of the fiction will be elaborated in detail. Therefore it is necessary to have a glimpse on what these five stories talk about and its connectivity to the shaping of hyphenated identity of the 'I' narrator and representation of Chinese and American identities.

In the first story, "No Name Woman", the 'I' narrator tells the story of her aunt, who becomes pregnant when her husband is far away from home. She is abandoned by her husband's family so that she has to come back to her parent's home. The villagers destroy the aunt's parents' home. She is accused of being guilty of her deviant behavior. The ending is that the no name aunt with her new born infant jump into a well. According to Song Zhangye (2005: 133), the main reason for the narrator's aunt's namelessness is that the families are ashamed of her adultery and are never allowed to talk about her by name. In this story, the Chinese women's inferior family and social status in Old China has been revealed, which is one aspect defining and shaping the Chinese social norms and values. More importantly, the patriarchal village and family are influential in governing the Chinese people particularly in respects of morality and daily affairs, which have many impacts on the formation of Chinese identities and will be given much attention in the analysis part.

"White Tigers", the second episode of *The Woman Warrior*, deals with that the 'I' narrator, a girl from the village, who dreams that she becomes a woman warrior like the

Chinese classic heroine Hua Mu Lan, who substitutes for her old father by enlisting to go fighting for the emperor. The ‘I’ narrator imagines that she has been brought away by an old couple when she was seven years old. She is trained to be a martial artist. When she finally becomes a versatile warrior and overthrows the old inept emperor, she and her army obtain the triumph of the war and uphold a new emperor. She saves the country and the village, taking revenge by killing the baron who bullies the villagers. Interestingly, the ‘I’ narrator also finds her husband in the war, a man who has been her good friend since her childhood. The ‘I’ narrator gives birth to their baby in the army. Finally, the girl comes back to her hometown to live happily with her family. In this story, the application of the Chinese balladry of Hua Mu Lan is criticized by Huo Xioajuan as an adaptation in order to represent the American identity that women are independent and have the courage to fight for their legitimate social and political status (2006: 70–71). Undoubtedly, the traditional Chinese women are compared to the independent American women constructing the variations of Chinese and American women images and their identities. Furthermore, the filial behavior of the ‘I’ narrator conforms to Chinese traditional norms. Simultaneously, she is courageous to strive for her own career and family, which is perceived by Song Zhangye as the feature of American-individualism (2005: 134). The portrayal of Chinese identities interwoven with the articulation of American identities justifies the ‘I’ narrator attempting to construct her hyphenated identity.

The third story, “Shaman”, tells the story of Brave Orchid, the mother of the ‘I’ narrator. The story begins with the ‘I’ narrator’s reminiscence. She recollects that Brave Orchid takes out the metal tube with her medical diploma inside, which has been issued by the To Keung School of midwifery. Continuously, it tells how Brave Orchid enrolled in this school and what her studying life is. Then, the plot develops to the description how Brave Orchid becomes a successful doctor in China. Brave Orchid makes every effort to come to America for reuniting with her husband. When she comes to America, she and her husband open a laundry to maintain the family. In the final part of this story, the ‘I’ narrator comes to visit her parents. One day before the ‘I’ narrator leaves, Brave Orchid has a long conversation with her. Brave Orchid complains that she is exhausted because she has to be hard-working to earn money, supporting the whole family. On the

one hand, Brave Orchid is portrayed as representative of the traditional Chinese woman, who is industrious and endeavors to work for the family. On the other hand, she is dauntless when she fights with the "sitting ghost", which raises another image of the Chinese women. This is criticized by Song in that the quality of courage shown by Brave Orchid both in China and in America conforms to the American positive stereotype (2005: 134). The various cultural traits offered by "Shaman", which designate the Chinese national identities, will be given in-depth research in the analysis part.

"At the Western Palace" is the fourth story. Its protagonist is Moon Orchid, the younger sister of Brave Orchid. Moon Orchid comes to America with the help of Brave Orchid, who wants Moon Orchid to meet her husband because he owns a personal clinic and is very wealthy. However, Moon Orchid's husband has immigrated to America a long time before and married an American woman. Meanwhile, Moon Orchid lives a leisured and comfortable life in Hong Kong with the financial support of her husband, even though she knows that he has another wife in America. However, Brave Orchid urges Moon Orchid to take back her position of being the "First wife". Finally Moon Orchid meets her husband. While the result is seldom as Brave Orchid expects, Moon Orchid gets back her position as the "big wife" and is privileged in her husband's American family. Moon Orchid cannot become accustomed to American culture and society. She becomes insane and dies in an asylum eventually. It is another tragic story of Chinese woman is portrayed in *The Woman Warrior*. The passive image of traditional Chinese women is unfolded. Moon Orchid is a "loser" because she cannot adjust herself to the new environment, compared to Brave Orchid's perseverance and striving in America. More significantly, the deep rooted cultural decisive factors which cause Moon Orchid's insanity are concerned with the Chinese patriarchal hierarchy, which will be discussed in the practical part.

The final story describes the 'I' narrator's own growing experience. As the descendant of Chinese immigrants in America, she is confronted with many conflicts of Chinese and American cultures. The story tells that the 'I' narrator cannot speak for a year. Moreover, she is ever silenced by Brave Orchid who holds the idea that it is easier to learn speaking with loose tongue. The main clue of this story is that the 'I' narrator

wants to share her untold "secrets", which are her experiences from her childhood to adulthood. For the 'I' narrator, educated by American culture in school, the Chinese cultural norms and values often make her feel confusion. It is very difficult for the 'I' narrator to speak out intelligibly what the 'I' narrator feels, because the conflicts of two cultures make her "unspeakable". It is a long period for the 'I' narrator to adjust in-between the two cultures. Under this circumstance, the formation of her hyphenated identity is indispensable for surviving in the cultural collision (Song 2005: 134). The focus on deciphering the procedure of constructing the hyphenated identity of the 'I' narrator will be presented in the analysis part.

1.4 Literary Review of *The Woman Warrior*

Since its publication in 1976, the book has received a lot of critiques and favoring voices. These critiques are mainly divided into three categories: Most critics have been raised in western culture, particularly American critics. Generally speaking, they present positive views and praise for *The Woman Warrior* claiming that it presents a mysterious and distinct Chinese culture to Western publics. For instance, John Leonard remarked that " As a dream- of the 'female avenger'- it is dizzying, elemental, a poem turned into sword…reimagining the past with such dark beauty, such precision and anger that you feel you have saddled the Tao dragon and see all through the fiery eye of God" (1981)[1] . However, some Chinese-American critics strongly insist that the Chinese culture portrayed in *The Woman Warrior* is partial and distorted. For example, Frank Chin firmly asserts that these depictions of culture norms and Chinese images are a cynical distortion, and inauthentic (quoted in Wong 1999: 6). The third criticism is a neutral stance, stating that these Chinese cultural norms and images are deliberately constructed in order to demonstrate the author's distinct experience of in-between Chinese and American cultures. Zhang Ya-Jie (1999: 17) is one of the representatives of this idea. The above summarizations of literary reviews are based on articles or papers published in English in books and periodicals.

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[1] Quoted on back cover of *The Woman Warrior*, Kingston, 1981.

The Woman Warrior has gained diversified scholarship such as in studies of Anglo-American Feminism, the Orientalism, and the immigrants' ethnicity (Wong 1999: 12). Besides, there are many Chinese academic research articles and papers discussing about it. These collected Chinese research articles are classified into three categories. Although these collected articles cannot include all reviews of native Chinese towards *The Woman Warrior*, the viewpoints of these three categories are broadly accepted by Chinese academics, to which I will make reference in the analysis of the two aims of this thesis.

The first category deals with the cultural identity expressed by *The Woman Warrior* and the construction of the image of "self" and the image of "others" referring respectively to Chinese immigrants and Americans. This category of research articles mainly concerns the rewriting of Chinese stories to construct the images of "self" and "others". According to this category's viewpoints, the images of "self" and "other" are not fixed, but flexible. For Chinese immigrants inheriting Chinese culture, the Americans are perceived as "others"; on the other hand, the native Chinese (on the mainland) are also perceived as "others", because these Chinese immigrants and their descendents have already been integrated into local society and American culture to some extent (Zhang 2006: 161). Therefore, Chinese immigrants establish their image of "self" which cannot be simply defined as Chinese or American, but can only be defined and constructed by Chinese American themselves. The analysis of this category points out that the Chinese immigrants portrayed in *The Woman Warrior* aim at expressing their own voices as ethnic minorities in America and getting to be listened by the "others", Americans who are in the dominant position. The "self-image" interwoven with the "otherness" constructs the Chinese immigrants' peculiar identities. This category's critical analysis provides much assistance in unfolding the identity formation of the 'I' narrator.

The second category concerns the writing techniques of *The Woman Warrior*. Maxine Hong Kingston is a creative writer. The distinct rhetoric employment in *The Woman Warrior* is collage, argued by this category. For instance, the representative example of the application of collage is in the second story "White Tiger", which contains plenty of adaptation of Chinese and Western cultural stories. Firstly, she rewrites famous balladry about the heroine Hua Mu lan. Secondly, the story of Yue Fei, a famous general in

Southern Song dynasty who was tattooed on his back with the revenge text by his mother, is applied to the plot where the 'I' narrator is also tattooed in "White Tigers" before she goes to battle (Li 2007: 118). Thirdly, the depiction of the love story between the 'I' narrator and her husband in the army is the representation of the classical plot of Occidental romance (Li 2007: 118). The rhetorical techniques in the narrative discourse *The Woman Warrior* are actually the peculiar strategy of the author. As a consequence, the adaptation of Chinese myth through the incorporation of Western norms presents *The Woman Warrior* as a particular discourse for researching hyphenated identity of the 'I' narrator. The rewriting of Hua Mu Lan in "White Tigers" will be discussed from a feminist and postcolonial angle to analyze how this identity is constructed as a toolkit to interrogate the hegemony of Chinese patriarchy.

The third category analyzes the symbols and codes of Chinese culture. Take "dragon" and "ghosts" for instance: these two images frequently appear in Chinese myths, balladry and legends, which are also discussed a lot by the Chinese people. "Dragon" has multiple meanings in Chinese culture. The usage of it in *The Woman Warrior* refers to the totem of the Chinese nation and also the "God" of rain and the "Goddess" of the thunderstorm, which are symbols of power, while the employment of the image of "ghosts" ("鬼" in Chinese) demonstrates multi-faceted cultural connotations. *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary* (TCCD) defines "ghost" as having seven meanings in different uses (2005: 417). It can be a noun and an adjective. The most frequent usages refer to the spirit after people's death and a description of sneak behavior. According to the using of "ghost" in different contexts, the cultural connotations are totally different. The "ghost" in *The Woman Warrior* is used to describe not only Chinese but also Americans. To describe the Chinese immigrants as "ghosts" is to indicate their embarrassing in-between experience. Moreover, the exertion of "dragon" in *The Woman Warrior* is actually the representation of peculiar Chinese concepts and images. In short, the application of Chinese cultural codes and mythology in this fiction are concerned with the special strategy of Kingston, which are not merely the portrayals of the stereotypes.

1.5 Thesis Structure

So far, the introduction part has presented the research question, which includes two aims: one is to analyze the formation of the hyphenated identity of the 'I' narrator and the other to examine how Chinese and American national identities are represented in *The Woman Warrior*. Then the plot summaries and the literary review have been briefly introduced, which are useful for analyzing the two aims. This thesis includes four chapters: two theoretical chapters, one analysis chapter and the conclusion. The summaries below will present the theoretical and analysis chapters' construction in a nutshell.

Chapter two aims at elaborating on the notion of the hyphenated identity from the perspective of social psychology and postcolonialism. It is necessary to have a small section to elucidate the social psychological explanation of what the national identity means to the individuals and what the procedure is when individuals construct their national identities. Subsequently, postcolonial viewpoints provide the theoretical basis for analyzing hyphenated identity, interpreting how it is formed and its peculiarities. Moreover, since America is a multicultural country, immigrants from other nations are confronted with the problem of how to deal with the situation of being in-between. Consequently, the thesis proceeds to the discussion of the dual identities of Americans in literary discourses, American hyphenation. This thesis will examine the formation of the hyphenated identity for the ethnic minorities in America, including Chinese Americans.

The third chapter of this thesis deals with the discussion of Chinese and American national identities. In this chapter, the most representative Chinese and American identities in the corresponding period will be explored through such ideologies as filial piety for Chinese and individualism for Americans. Moreover, the Chinese social mechanism such as the family-village system, which is deeply rooted in China and the crucial factor generating the collective consciousness of the Chinese people, will be presented in detail. In addition, the features of Chinese identity as holding the concept of harmony and the indirectness are important elements, which this thesis will discuss. The theoretical discussion about "Americanness" and the "American Dream",

designating individualism and upward mobility, will be presented with the consequence that Chinese immigrants' and the 'I' narrator are influenced by these two American ideologies, which are actively internalized and practiced in their lives. These theoretical contents construct the ground for demonstrating what Chinese and American national identities are.

Chapter four explores the analysis of the hyphenated identity formation of the 'I' narrator and the portrayal of the Chinese and American identities in *The Woman Warrior*. The construct of the hyphenated identity of the 'I' narrator as Chinese-American will be analyzed from two angles. Firstly, I analyze the application of the feminist perspectives on which the gendered traits of the 'I' narrator subvert the traditional Chinese images of women, which actually substantiate the assertion that the new gendered characteristics give the 'I' narrator the power to articulate her American identities. Feminist viewpoints traditionally aim at changing the unequal situation between women and men in society, assisting me in analyzing the narrator's attempts to establish her own gendered expectations, which play a significant role in embodying her double national identity. Secondly, I employ a postcolonial approach to analyze the expositions of Hua Mu Lan and Ts'ai Yen in order to decipher how hyphenated identity is constructed. The metonymic displacement of Hua Mu Lan's filiality breaks out of the shackle of Chinese patriarchal hegemony. Moreover, the resemblance between Ts'ai Yen and the narrator functions as the mirror image of the narrator's hybridity, which is composed of both "partial Chineseness" and "partial Americanness". Postcolonialist theory effectively establishes a discourse arguing a power relationship between the authorities and the oppressed, with the consequence that hyphenated identity constructed in the "Third Space" rises as the toolkit and surrogate of the subordinates. Finally, an imagological analysis based on the chosen texts will focus on the cultural construction of the Chinese and American identities represented in *The Woman Warrior*.

2 THE HYPHENATED IDENTITIY

This chapter deals with the theoretical discussion about the notion of the hyphenated identity. According to the explanation given by OED, it refers to the form of the national identity for individuals. An individual's national identification is obviously a self-categorizing procedure, which associates with the individual. However, it is mentioned previously that the national identity is also perceived as group identity. From the perspective of social psychology, national identity is one of the social identities (David & Bar-Tal 2009: 356). The features of the individual and the collective inextricably interweave when it comes to the notion of the hyphenated identity. Then, the following description aims at elucidating the relationship between national identity as individual identity and collective identity in order to reveal how the hyphenated identity is generated and its identification procedure. More significantly, the hyphenated identity in terms of hybridity will be discussed in postcolonial terms, explaining how it is constructed and its unique characteristics. Moreover, the issue concerning the Americans who are often confronted with the situation of constructing themselves as hyphenated will be discussed either.

2.1 Social Psychological View of Hyphenated Identity

According to David and Bar-Tal (2009: 355), social identity theory claims that personal identity (or individual identity) differs from social identity. Personal identity focuses on the unique features and characteristics of the individual. They (2009: 355) in quoting Tarjfel (2008: 255), write that social identity constitutes "part of the self-concept of the individual that derives from his knowledge about his membership". Social identity denotes that its group consciousness will influence the individual's concepts and ideology construction. Thus, the hyphenated identity's identification procedure is a self-identification, but inevitably with connectivity to the identification of the group, such as the nation, which implies that there is an overlap between hyphenated and national identity as collective identity. In illustrating the relationships of self-identification to social identity, in particular, the collective identity of the nation, David and Bar-Tal (2009: 355) continue: "social identity provides substance to the notion of a

socially structured field within the individual". Therefore, national identities in the plural provide the substances for the individual to choose and construct their own identities. Furthermore, the identification of these various national traits belongs to the dimension of the macrolevel by which individuals observe and measure these identities of the nation in a broad sense. Subsequently, individuals identify themselves with elements of the identities of that nation also on the microlevel (David & Bar-Tal 2009: 335).

In illustrating the relationship between the microlevel of individual identity and the macrolevel of national identity, David and Bar-Tal (2009: 358) point out that the notion of "identification" is crucial, even essential, for the existence of social identity. They define "identification" as (2009: 358):

> The ability of individuals to identify by name the collective (in our case a nation) in which they consider themselves to be members and to express some measure of emotional attachment indicating the extent of their desire to belong to this collective and the degree of importance attributed to it.

The above explanation justifies individuals shaping their identities through identifying the values, norms, symbols, and shared beliefs of society, which are internalized and acknowledged by them. However, social values, norms, symbols and shared beliefs are definitely changed because of the variability in social, economic and political contexts. Immigrants are often confronted with this problem that they need to reconsider their national identities because they have already internalized their new identities of the host country to a certain extent. According to David and Bar-Tal., immigrants re-identify their national identities when they are classified as minorities in the new host country; quite often the hyphenated identity becomes their choice (2009: 359). They conclude that there are three aspects involved in the procedure of identifying the national identity of individuals. Firstly, the cognitive aspect contains two elements: self-categorization and the importance that individuals attribute to their identification with the collective. These two components denote that the individual categorizes the "collectiveness" of the social group, especially the nation, which is the primary premise on which collective identities are founded. National identities need to identify with the nation. In other words, these national identities should be acknowledged by the members constituting

the nation. Secondly, emotional identification refers to the individual's emotional attachment to the collective identity, such as religious, gender, class identity etc. Within this thesis, national identity is concerned with regard to its collectiveness, which inevitable requires individual's emotional affiliation. Thirdly, it is the motivational aspect, which is related to the individual's will to belong to a collective (David & Bar-Tal 2009: 350–360). The immigrants are definitely confronted with these three aspects in an environment where the dominant cultures are different from their homelands' culture. However, long residence in the host country reshape immigrants' values and social beliefs; these already transformed internalized values and beliefs erase their previous identity construction, which results in the reconstruction of their nationalities. The immigrants' values and cultural accumulation, integrated with the new host country's value and social beliefs, lead them to negotiate their national identities. The assumed choice, hyphenated identity, provides them an alternative answer to their national identities. Within the scope of social identity theory, the hyphenated identity is anchored in two dimensions: the individual micro level and the collective macro level. This interrelationship is demonstrated in the above explanations. From the social psychological point of view, the construction of hyphenated identity composes of the process of individual self-identification towards the values and beliefs, especially their categorization of the collective, the nation; and the process of identification of negotiating the nationalities. In short, hyphenated identity is a justified choice for immigrants for reshaping and redefines their national identities on the basis of the perspectives of social psychology.

2.2 Hybridity

In stressing the term hyphenated identity, another relevant term, hybridity must be elucidated. The above short discussion of hyphenated identity was analyzed from social psychological perspectives. Here, the hyphenated identity is subject to the stressing of the hybridity from postcolonial standpoints. Homi Bhabha (2004: 1174) claims that hybridity is a product of colonial power, which is actually a kind of identity as "repeated as something different- a mutation, a hybrid'. To know how the hybridity is

generated, it is necessary to understand the colonial power and its practice. On the basis of Bahbah's explanation, the colonialists attempt to impose colonial authority on subaltern groups through discriminatory practices. As mentioned by Bhabha, the discriminatory effect does not simply refer to "a 'person' or to a dialectical power struggle between self and other", but also refers to "a discrimination between mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles" (2004: 1174). Therefore, from this explanation, hybridity as the product of the discriminatory effect actually exists in an ambivalent form; as Bhabha states, "it is precisely as a separation form origins and essences" (2004: 1181) The origins and essences of the "mother culture" are actually be disturbed in the form of hybird. Bhabha argues that ambivalence is a particular character of hybridity. If hybridity is "ambivalent", it engenders the connotation of "Border" (Bhabha 1997: 4). Specifically speaking, the connotation of "ambivalence" is caused by the unclear "borderline" between the origins or essence and the repetitive, displacement, the hybridity so to speak.

To discuss the ambivalence of hybridity, it is necessary to enunciate the "borderness" of culture. According to Hofstede, culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" from a social anthropological perspective (1991: 5). Based on this interpretation, human culture is classified into various categories. Obviously, the borderline exists among these various culture categories. Criticizing cultural liberalism, which "tries to normalize cultural difference, to turn the presumption of equal cultural respect into the recognition of equal cultural worth", Bhabha points out that " it does not recognize the disjunctive, 'borderline' temporalities of partial, minority cultures" (2003: 56). In this argument, Bhabha is in favor of the idea that minority culture is actually disjunctive and has a so-called temporal borderline. More significantly, minority culture is perceived as partial, in particular in a multicultural background, which will easily obfuscate the "origins" or "essence" of one culture. The notion of "partial" and "borderline" of culture means the phenomenon of the emergence of cultural hybridization. Based on Bhabha's elaboration of the minority culture's feature as partial, it refers to the culture is intervened by other cultures but also is connective to them. It is in the position of "in-between" resulting in the consequence that minority culture is "baffling, both alike and

different" (2003: 54). The very act of cultural hybridization among minority groups is described by Bhabha as that "the discourses of minorities propose a social subject through cultural hybridization […] the articulation the baffling alikeness and banal divergence" (2003: 54). Thus, it is justified to assert that the hybridity, as the strategy of a minority culture in articulating their own wishes, generating the qualities of "resemblance" and "divergence", compared to the "original" cultures, designates "ambivalence". Moreover, the "temporal borderline" between the hybrid culture and the original culture is in this sense. Therefore, to both the "mother culture" and "alien culture", the displayed qualities of the hybrid culture inheriting from these two cultures are as discussed above, the "partial". Since hybridity expresses the quality of "partial", it is justified to claim that the minority culture influenced by the dominant culture has experienced the hybridization as well as Bhabha asserts that the culture is "in-between" (Bhabha 2003: 54).

Moreover, the ambivalence and borderline are constructed in terms of both of "space" and "time" in terms of the hybridity as cultures "in-between". According to Bhabha, from the aspect of the space, this "separateness" of hybridity is "less than one and double", which is constructed by its own uniqueness (2004: 1181). As mentioned above, the minority culture generates the effect of "baffling alikeness" and "banal divergence", which exists in so-called the separated space. Therefore, such an "interstitial" feature of minority culture actually provides the passage in this "ambivalent", "separated" space to allow the procession of cultural hybridity (Bhabha 1997: 4). From the point of view of spatial hybridity, "beyond the borderline and ambivalence" has another meaning, which "signifies the spatial distance and marks progress" (Bhabha 1997: 4). Chronologically, the "ambivalence" and "borderline" of hybridity indicate the "beyond" of the "presence". According to Bhabha (1997: 4), "this very action going beyond the 'presence' or beyond the border of time becomes disjunctive and displaced without returning to the 'presence', which is not the breaking or bonding of past and future or synchronic". It is clear that hybridity designating "beyond of 'presence'" actually provides a place where people are confronted with cultural collision can get relief of "the temporal, social differences that interrupt our collusive of cultural contemporaneity" (Bhabha 1997: 6). Therefore, the hybridization of minority culture is

culturally “ambivalent”, “partial”, “beyond the borderline” spatially and chronologically rather than merely the mixture of two or more cultures.

Hybridity is actually the agent for “articulating the minorities’ displacement of metonymy and disavowing the authoritative colonial culture”, which generates an effect of “dislocation” (Bhabha 1997: 114). The “presence” of dislocation of colonial discourse makes its “essence” unrecognizable. According to Bhabha, this “presence of dislocation” of the “essence” of “original” colonial discourses is the articulation of “displacement” which “identifies ‘the culture’ as a disposal of power” (Bhabha 1997: 114). As the tool to articulate, the hybridity “intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its ‘presence’, but it is no longer a representation of an essence; it is partial presence” (Bhabha 1997: 114) Once again, hybridity as partial “presence” has its own peculiarity. This peculiarity is the metonymic displacement, which means that hybridity has partial “resemblance” to the authoritative or the “original” culture but employs a “different” cultural manifestation in order to “dislocate” the authoritative cultural “essence”. Therefore, the traits of “split” and disjunctive display the effect of repetitive mimicry. Introspectively, the displacement metonymy is actually “baffling alikeness” and “banal divergence”. Hybridity is always “ambivalent”, “split” between the “essence” and its appearance. As to people in subaltern groups, the construct of hybridity is actually strategically to articulate their own identities in order to dispose of the dominant cultural identities. Therefore, the features of hybridity are usually “repetitive”, “mimicry”, “disjunctive” and “metonymy displacement” (Bhabha 1997: 114–115).

The very notion of hybridity mentioned by Bhabha in the context of post-colonialism is elucidated above. His term like the so-called “Third Space” highlights the necessity to articulate its various peculiarities as ambivalent, partial, beyond the presence, disjunctive and contingency. Cultural minorities perform their hybrid identities as the approach of articulating their identities in a multicultural environment for the reason that cultural minorities especially these immigrants and their descendants, are in a position where cultures collide so often. Furthermore, immigrants and their descendants need to find a way to reconstruct themselves when they attempt to search the place of belonging. They construct themselves as hybrids, through which they get rid of the

dilemma of "in-between". These ambivalent, partial, blurred and temporal cultural elements and identities construct immigrants and their descendants' hybrid identities. Joep Leerssen (2007: 341) asserts that "otherness is not only resisted or marked off, but also incorporated and internalized. The intertwining of identity and otherness is now a generally current concept under the appellation of 'hybridity'." In other words, hybridity contains the elements of identity of both "mother culture" and "alien culture", which can be easily understood as hyphenated identity.

2.3 American Hyphenation

As discussed in 2.1, hyphenated identity is related to self-construction of the nationality. Considering the hyphenated identity as hybrid identity in the postcolonial context discussed above for minorities, it is necessary to discuss some relevant issues concerning minorities. According to Virinder S. Kalra, Raminder Kaur and John Hutnyk (2005: 14), the notion of "immigrant" is inadequate to refer to people migrating to their destination country since it marginalizes and racializes a group politically. Moreover, the migration process for minorities is not one-off event but incomplete. Thus, a much more appropriate word to designate the migrated minorities is Diaspora. Diaspora combined with a hyphenated, or hybrid identity, provides us with a much more "beyond" connotation as non-political and flexible rather than the static and fixed notion of immigrant (Kalra et al. 2005: 14). In this respect, the migrated people i.e. immigrants are regarded as diasporas, which sounds more appropriate. Based on the notion of diaspora as "beyond" the original place, I argue that the diaspora is not confined to designate those migrated people but also denote the consciousness "beyond". Diasporas with their descendants are confronted with cultural conflicts, hybridization and mediation. Their consciousness about the "mother" culture is far "beyond" the "essence". This situation occurs that diasporic writing become popular as a result of the creativity and rethinking of those minorities in diaspora both mentally and physically.

Actually, it is very controversial to denote the first or second generation of descendants of these immigrants as diasporas because they have a long and stable residence in the host country. However, it cannot be ignored that these descendants are very creative in

diasporic writing such as Amy Tan and Yamanaka Lois-Ann. To make the notion of hyphenated identity relating to the diasporas and their descendants, it is necessary to discuss diasporic writings, which refers to the literary representation and writings of the experiences of diasporas. These experiences are mainly about diasporic feeling and cultural conflict. According to Wang Ning (2006: 172), Maxine Hong Kingston's works representing the Chinese and American cultural conflicts and mediation are diasporic writings in a broad sense. Therefore, in this respect, it indicates that the first or even the second descendant generations of the immigrants or diasporas are confronted with the problem of cultural conflicts and collision. They are diasporic in the respect of culture rather than their ancestors, who are diasporas both physically and mentally.

Motivated by the diasporic situation, the migrated people and their descendants inevitably seek emotional and cultural belonging if they are marginalized (Kalra et al. 2005: 30). The formation of the hyphenated identity for the immigrants and their descendants can reinforce the feeling of belonging to the nation-states, but also results in new identities which have no affiliation to the nation-state form (Kalra et al. 2005: 33). That is to say, the hyphenated identity is the new form of identity which denotes immigrants' and their descendants feeling of belonging beyond the fixed geographical and political nation-state; rather to the "nation" in its cultural dimension. Moreover, Karlra et al. also point out that the hyphenated identity such as the Asian-American and Greek-Australian types also emphasize the difference of the group by designating the "homeland" as a key way of understanding and verifying diasporas' settlement abroad (Kalra et al. 2005: 33).

The notion of hyphenated identity as hybrid identity is applied to denote immigrants and their descendants' pursuit of cultural and national belonging Furthermore, minorities in the United States, a representative immigration country, also construct their hyphenated identity, the phenomenon of American hyphenation. This is the subject of this thesis.

Stanley Allen Rhenson (2005: 115), researching immigration in the United States, refers to hyphenation in association with the American immigrants identities in this way: "Hyphenation has a long history in the United States. It is a paradox of American ethnic identities that this country often provides more expansive identities than those with

which immigrants arrived." Based on such explanation, he means that American immigrants' and their descendants' identities like Irish-American and Chinese-American can be modified by hyphenation. For the United States, the integration of numerous ethnic groups forms its multicultural social environment. The famous notion of the "melting pot" emphasizes the phenomenon that immigrants were integrated into the dominant white society and became the "Newly American", with the connotation of uniformity of the dominant American culture. However, Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean (2008: 47) perceive the American culture as follows:

> Arguments about ethnicity in recent years, influenced by the post 1960' interest in multiculturalism, have moved away from the pressures to one central, uniform idea of America as the only definition of nationhood and towards cultural pluralism. This allows for diverse ethnic groups to share common connections as Americans, without losing their links to older allegiances and identities.

The notion of melting pot is not given so much attention as before. The emergence of bicultural American suggested by the above description has become the focus in today's America. Thus, when it comes to the constitution of nationality, immigrants have to consider to what extent their own national culture has influenced them and to what is the extent the new American society they have been integrated into. The old and new cultural identities reshape these ethnic minorities as dual citizens. Undoubtedly, the hyphenated identity employed to depict minorities' national identity is appropriate, especially for those immigrants' descendants who are born in America.

Moreover, in reference to the cultural construction of the ethnicity of immigrants and their descendants in ethnic diversified America, the pursuing of a homogeneous national identity or culture has been confronted with the challenging of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism. However, it is suggested by Bourne that it would be an appropriate resolution to envisage a "trans-national" federal culture. The notion of "trans-national America" in association with the tradition of "wholesome provincialism" explains today's American culture, which is called by him as "unite and not divide" (quoted in Sollor 1986: 184). Hence in the context of multi-diversified cultural society described by Bourne, hyphenated qualities of immigrants' identities as cultural construction are justified. Even though the very notion of a multi-diversified cultural society set challenges to American's hyphenation formation, the identity focuses on the dual

properties of the immigrants which have internalized both the American cultural elements and the immigrants' own cultural peculiarities which by no means deny their multicultural elements.

In making research on the cultural construction of American hyphenation, it is clear that African-American, as the largest ethnic group, is the representative of minorities with these identities in the United States. The long history of slavery made Africans the one major ethnic group in America. The African people's historical participation in America bears their unique psychology. Even though the elimination of slavery and the establishment of democracy, the cultural construction of African-Americans' identities represents the dialectical effects of the mainstream of white cultures and the long history of servitude. From the psychological perspective, Frantz Fanon shows that Negro's cultural views and perceptions are shaped slowly and subtly as 'white-centered' in a society where almost the cultural mediums talk about the white culture without the Negro's voices (2004: 467). Even if Fanon's psychological views are in order to analyze whether African Americans face neurosis, this viewpoint implies that in a dominating white cultural environment, especially in the United States, most African descendents will be educated as "White-Centered" or white supremacy so to speak, even with regard to their family education. In such circumstances, African's voices are hardly listened to, which results in the psychological construction of Africans' cultural identities being "white-culture-centered". Compared to the period when the African peoples' voices were rarely listened to, today, many African-Americans have dedicated to expressing their ideas about their unique national or cultural identities through literary discourses.

Surrounded by white culture, the expressions of African people's national consciousness are perceived in different viewpoints. From the white historian's liberal perspectives, African-Americans establish a sense of new identity. It is argued by Campbell and Kean that this kind of new identity still "maintains an effective and life-affirming set of black values through the power of the voice and its willingness to enter into a dialogue with the dominant culture" (2008: 81). By contrast, there is another viewpoint claiming that the various African tribes in America were forced together in slavery on the basis of the shared experience, and that "the principal forms of cultural

expression [were] essentially the same and helped to mould 'oneness of black culture'" (Campbell & Kean 2008: 82). This elaboration holds that African people conform to their own culture in defiance of the dominant white culture. Regardless of the argument between these two academic studies of African-Americans' national identity, it is undoubtedly true that the formation of their nationality has been influenced by various historical factors. The cultural construction of their identities is hyphenated as a consequence of double influence by white culture and black culture: as Du Bois writes, " twoness –an American, a negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (quoted in Campbell & Kean 2008: 84).

Obviously, African-Americans are by no means the only group carrying the label of hyphenated identity. According to Stanley Allen Rhenson (2005: 103), Irish-Americans as an ethnic group have advantages in being integrated into America because "They come from the English-speaking culture, a culture that has Western traditions as part of its heritage- both of which help facilitate a relatively easy transition to American culture." Because of this easy transition, the Irish-American as described by Michael Walzer is both in cultural and political terms Irish-American (quoted in Rhenson 2005: 102).

The above discussion shows that the construction of nationality of both White Europeans and the African Blacks involves the procession of hyphenation. As well as their fellow citizens, the Chinese-Americans also have "doubleness" in their identities. The cultural construction of the identities of the descendants of the Chinese immigrants is likely to be bi-dimensional, according to Jeanne L.Tsai, Yu-wen Yin and Peter A. Lee (2000: 305). Based on the classification that there are three kinds of Chinese-Americans: the Chinese immigrants who came to America long time ago, the descendants of these Chinese immigrants and the newly Chinese immigrants in America, they show that these three kinds of Chinese in the United States have different views of "being Chinese" and "being American" (Tsai et al. 2000: 305). "Being Chinese" and "being American" are set to find out to what extent Chinese-Americans identify themselves as Chinese or Americans. According to investigation of Tsai et al., the second group, the descendants of Chinese immigrants refers to American-born Chinese (ABC), who has

the double standards for the identification of "being Chinese" and "being American". Compared to the other two groups' uni-dimensional criterion towards the identification of "being Chinese" or "being American", the ABC have their own special reasons to choose bi-dimension to construct their "Chineseness" and the "Americanness" (Tsai et al. 2000: 305):

> Because American-born Chinese are born in the United States, they are imbuded with American culture; however, they are born to Chinese parents, they are also influenced by Chinese culture. Unlike their exposure to American culture, their exposure to Chinese culture is limited to specific contexts, such as at home with their families or specific Chinese community setting such as Chinese church or Chinese language school. Therefore, in specific contexts, ABC may be influenced by Chinese culture, whereas in other contexts (e.g., school, work). They may be influenced by mainstream American culture. Thus, their notions of being Chinese and being American may be context-specific and may develop independently each other.

It demonstrates that there is equilibrium between being Chinese and being American for ABC because is decided by the specific contexts. However, the other two kinds of Chinese immigrants have much stronger Chinese cultural affiliation. For ABC, there is no obvious preference for constructing their nationalities as being Chinese or being American indicated by the above illustration. Obviously, ABC constructs their national identity in conformity with the hyphenation. The "doubleness" of Chinese immigrant's descendants in America justifies the validity of the cultural construction of hyphenated identity of Kingston in *The Woman Warrior*.

So far, the three ethnic groups mentioned are examples to substantiate the fact that those ethnic minorities do experience the acculturation of "doubleness" in the United States. As to immigrants, no matter they are newly comers or the long-time residents in America, they must share some views in common whether it is to seek a liberal and prosperous country or the aim to realize the American Dream. One thing is clear that their "Americanness" is definitely an element of their hyphenated identity. In this thesis, hyphenated identity of Americans is analyzed and echoes Sollor's idea of "wholesome provincialism" in terms of a moral and aesthetic *ideal* to be realized in America. Furthermore, the "wholesome provincialism" in association with other groups' identities in a positive stance, establishes an organic harmoniously American society

(Sollor 1986: 181). The national or cultural identification process for the immigrants in a multicultural society is full of struggling and agony. For this reason, the literary medium as the cultural transfer conveys the position of ethnic minorities searching for their cultural affection and national identities. As mentioned above, the diasporic writing created by these immigrants and their descendants helps them to express the cultural dilemmas they are confronted with and their inner feelings about their nationality. The literary formulation of hyphenated identity provides a very effective way to study how these diasporas reconstruct themselves. In order to elucidate the notion of the hyphenated identity, relevant subjects are explained as above. This chapter started by discussing the psychological view of what are involved in the identification of the hyphenated identity and then developed to the postcolonial theoretical analysis of the hybridity. In the end, it studied the prevail phenomenon of American hyphenation.

3 CHINESE AND AMERICAN NATIONAL IDENTITIES

According to Leerssen (2007: 27), imagology is concerned with a theoretical discussion of cultural or national stereotypes rather than a theory of cultural or national identity. In his sense, cultural or national stereotypes in terms of national identity are actually representation in a discourse as textual strategies. Thus, this chapter aims at discussing the construction of Chinese and American identities in an imagological sense. As mentioned in the introduction, the identities of these two nations will be applied to describe the identities of the nation as a whole in terms of shared beliefs, values, concepts, conventions and characteristics. To investigate these national identity definers as constructions in the literary discourse of *The Woman Warrior*, it is noticeable that the theoretical discussion about these definers should be in conformity with the corresponding period. The time scale indicated by Kingston's novel is from the 1930s to the 1960s. Accordingly, this thesis will focus on Chinese and American images represented in this time scale. Therefore, in what follows, the discussion of two national identities as representations is confined to this period. It will be divided into two parts, which are the subaltern sections elaborating Chinese and American national identities respectively. It is necessary to keep in mind that the discussion of two nations' identities cannot include all traits, values and conventions, but are limited to certain particular characteristics, norms and merits which are suitable for the subsequent analysis of the selected excerpts drawn from *The Woman Warrior*.

3.1 Chinese Identities

To examine the representation of "Chineseness", one point should be clarified: that these Chinese images are confined to popular and dominant perceptions such are shown in Lin Yutang's *My Country and My People*. Moreover, China consists of fifty five ethnic minorities and one major ethnic group, the Han people. Therefore, the Chinese images studied here are in the context of the dominating Han culture and social conventions. The representation of Chinese national images in terms of its identities will be primarily on the basis of Lin's (1935) discernible observation. Moreover, Westerners' perceptions of what the Chinese are will be presented, such as Arthur

Smith (1894), whose criticism will provide the critical discourses to examine how Chinese national images are represented at the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. These images will be constructed on the grounds of Chinese philosophy, values and social merits, etc., which are, in short, in terms of the Chinese concept of harmony and the family-village system, filial piety and indirectness.

3.1.1 The Concept of "Harmony" and Love of Nature

The Chinese people are traditionally very familiar with the notion of "harmony" and are enthusiastic towards nature. Even though there is environmental pollution due to today's urbanization and industrialization in China, the Chinese people still hold the traditional concept of harmony and have much affection for nature. The concept of harmony emphasizes not only the relationship amongst human beings but also the relationship between human beings and nature. These are the two themes of the concept of harmony.

According to Gou Honglan (2002: 92), the Chinese are a nation which perceives harmony as an effective approach to keep itself united as long as possible. It is significant that the Han people should live harmoniously with other minorities, consequently establishing China as a harmonious society (2002: 92). This elaboration emphasizes the relationship between human beings. However, the concept of harmony also designates the relationship between the human race and nature due to the influence of Taoist philosophy. Lin (2002: 114–115) gives such an illustration of Taoist ideas about harmony and nature as below:

> Taoism, therefore, accounts for a side of the Chinese character which Confucianism cannot satisfy. There is a natural romanticism and a natural classicism in a nation, as in an individual. Taoism is the romantic school of Chinese thought, as Confucianism is the classic school. Actually, Taoism is romantic throughout. Firstly, it stands for the return to nature and the romantic escape from the world, and revolt against the artificiality and responsibilities of Confucian culture. Secondly, it stands for the rural ideal of life, art and literature, and the worship of primitive simplicity. And thirdly, it stands for the world of fancy and wonder, coupled with a childishly naïve cosmogony.

Such an explanation indicates that Taoist philosophy has taught Chinese people to be simple and have romantic consciousness. Moreover, to achieve harmony is firstly to

depart from the mundane world and return to rural life, which has affinity with nature. The return to nature is criticized by Lin as a kind of escape. However, the contemporary Chinese expert Gu Hongming gives another explanation, which implies that the love of nature in shaping the consciousness of harmony is the embodiment of the Chinese people's striving for "soul-making" accomplishment because nature has the power to refresh the human spirit and gives inspiration for living a good and peaceful life (2006: 62). Furthermore, Chinese literature, in particular the poetry, is more likely to portray primitive simplicity, which is perceived as the affection for nature. For instance, there was a school of poetry in the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420) represented by Tao Yuanming (365–427) who advocates returning to nature, rural life and also an appreciation of the beauty of nature. In such a case, this kind of poetry has the particular portrayal of the natural scenes and expresses the theme of loving nature and living in harmony with nature. In particular, human beings are united with nature.

Lin and Gu's analysis leads to the conclusion that the Chinese people love nature and believe that human beings should live harmoniously with it, which actually inspires the Chinese people to learn, observe and feel life in every aspect. One of these embodiments is to learn from nature. For example, the Chinese Kong Fu such as Taichi imitates the movements of animals to create martial skills. The performing of the skills of animal routine in the martial arts implies that the warrior rethinks the relationship between human beings and their earthly co-inhabitants, animals. Human beings, who are more intelligent than the animals, are privileged in the natural world. However, when the skills of animals become the inspiration for the attacking tactics of the martial arts, it is worth considering that the human race cannot be omnipotent. Moreover, the martial arts which employ animal skills emphasize the reciprocal relationship between human beings and animals, which means that human beings learn from animals and then are motivated to protect them, eventually achieving the harmonious co-inhabitation on earth. The concept of harmony is embodied in this perspective. Moreover, Chinese martial artists always keep in mind that the aim of exercising martial arts is strengthening and protecting their bodies rather than attacking people, which underlies the harmonious relationship between human beings. Moreover, in the process of exercising of the martial arts, the performers' spirit or moral cultivation is much more

important than the improvement of martial skills. Chinese Taoism emphasizes that human being should not be excessively emotional, as this is not good for self-cultivation. A Chinese sport like Taichi, which is inspired by nature, pacifies human beings' emotions because the performance of it is through smooth movements. The exercise of animal routine and the Taoist philosophical meditations are relevant to analyze the portrayal of the 'I' narrator's martial arts training.

In short, the consciousness of "harmony" and the love of nature are deeply ingrained in Chinese minds. The concept enables the Han people to learn to tolerate and know how to live with other ethnic groups. Consequently, the consciousness of harmony designating the integration of other ethnic minorities politically and culturally makes many contributions to social stability and nation-building. The concept of harmony enables the whole nation to forge ahead. This aesthetic in terms of love of nature is displayed in traditional Chinese drawings and landscape. The focus of Chinese brush painting is not put on its drawing techniques but on its unique presenting of Chinese mountains, hills and rivers. The harmony and love of nature as signs of Chinese identities are also implied in *The Woman Warrior,* which will be investigated intensively in the analysis part.

3.1.2 The Nation as Collective and the Family-Village system

According to Gou Honglan (2002: 92), the Chinese people today emphasize group consciousness more than the American people. She also says that Chinese people are collective. Prior to discussing the Chinese collectiveness, it is necessary to understand the factor which significantly influences the formation of Chinese collectiveness, the family-village system. To understand this system, it is indispensable to have a review of how the Chinese people interpret the "nation".

"the Chinese word for 'nation' is made up of two characters: the first, *guo*, means 'state' or 'kingdom' while the second, *jia* means 'family'", May-lee Chai and Winberg Chai write (2007: 79). Obviously, it demonstrates that the meaning of Chinese "nation" attaches much importance to its unit, the "family". To such an extent the Chinese people highlight the "family", which is decided by its function. According to Lin's observation

(2002: 173), the patriarchal family-system can explain why the Chinese people acted collectively till the 1930s:

> There was formerly no such word as "family system" as a sociological term; we knew the family only as "the basis of the state," or rather as the basis of human society. The system colors all our social life. It is personal, as our conception of government is personal. It teaches our children the first lessons in social obligations between man and man, the necessity of mutual adjustment, self-control, courtesy, a sense of duty, which is very well defined, a sense of obligation and gratitude toward parents, and respect for elders. It very nearly takes the place of religion by giving man a sense of social survival and family continuity, thus satisfying man's craving for immortality, and through the ancestral worship it makes the sense of immortality very vivid.

The above example explains that the Chinese people learn social obligations from the first lesson of the family, which is the primary basis of a nation. Moreover, Lin's explanation indicates that a family is a small community of individuals, which actually constructs a hierarchy, the basic form of Chinese society. The Chinese people have to know this hierarchy and to learn this tacit knowledge to survive: otherwise the recalcitrance will get one into trouble. For example, a person will be blamed or punished by the patriarch or elders of the family. The elders usually still have much power in making decisions about important things. Young people are normally in a subordinate status. A well-maintained family will make this family much stronger when there is pressure from outsiders. As in Aesop's fable, a "Bundle of Sticks"[2], union makes strength. A well-functioning family is like this: the patriarch is the manager followed by the members of the family, who cooperate with each other and execute the orders and will of the patriarch. Although this family mechanism presents patriarchal hegemonic style, it is the family system that governs family affairs. According to Hofstede (1991: 85), the gender role of a culture is related to this assertion that "where men are together a masculine culture is likely to dominate; where women are together, a feminine culture." Chinese society accepted patriarchy in the feudal era, as revealed by the Confucian five constant virtues mentioned previously. It is notable that the so-called family system disposes of the unequal relationship between the dominant elder

[2] Quoted online: Aesop for Children 1919.

generation and the subordinated younger generation, which marks the power structure of Chinese society in Old China as masculine, in which women as the subordinated could not get a position as equal as that of men. Accordingly, the family system functioning as the tool-kit of the patriarchal hierarchy overlooked women's subjectivity.

The Chinese family system played a significant role in sustaining governance. The classic literature of Confucianism, *Da Xue,* edited by Chu His (1130–1200) in the Song dynasty records this perception that an intellectual emperor has to conduct himself through high morality and adequate behavior; then he is qualified to be the manager of his own family. In the principles of governing his family well, therefore, he finds the abilities to manage the country successfully. In the long history of Chinese civilization, managing a family successfully has not only been a criterion for assessing the government servants but also for measuring ordinary people's merits at large. Whoever the people might be, if they have had the prestige of maintaining a big family very well, they will be perceived as the models of the society for their virtue. The concept of the family is important for the Han people. It is usually like a harbor where every ferry and ship can stay and be protected. To maintain a peaceful and harmonious family is the responsibility of the patriarch. The function of the family hierarchy works like this: on the one hand, every child is protected by it and should obey orders from the patriarch and the elders; on the other hand, every member has the obligation to protect the reputation and honor of the whole family. This family system is one factor breeding the collectiveness of the Chinese. In the late nineteenth century, the speeding up of semi-colonization indicated that feudal China was forced to open its doors. From then on, many Westerners such as priests, travelers and business men, presented their point of views about China: for instance, Arthur Smith published *Chinese Characteristics* in 1894. Gradually, the Chinese nation became perceived as collective (Gou 2002: 92).

Apart from the impact of the family system, Chinese collectiveness is undergirded by the village system, as illustrated below (Lin 2002: 198):

> […] in the village system, which is the family raised to a higher exponent. The pastoral background which developed the personal system of running National Museums also developed a village consciousness, similar to the growing civic consciousness of a New Yorker or a Chicagoan. From the love of the family there

> grew a love for the clan, and from the love for the clan there developed an attachment for the land where one was born. Thus a sentiment arose which may be called "provincialism," in Chinese called *t'unghsiang kuannien*, or "the idea of being from the same native place." This provincialism binds the people of the same village, or the same district, or the same province together, and is responsible for the existence of district schools, public grainage, merchant guilds, orphanages, and other public foundations. Fundamentally, they spring from the family psychology and do not depart from the family pattern. It is the family mind enlarged so as to make some measure of civic cooperation possible.

The so-called *t'unghsiang kuannien* (Known today as Tong Xian guannian) above is one consciousness which is also an influential concept of the Chinese. One example of this consciousness is that people from the same village or province should help each other. Due to the successful governance of the village system, this consciousness has become a very crucial belief of the Chinese people. To conform to Tong Xian, consciousness is expressed as the fulfillment of the responsibilities for these diasporas. The person practicing Tong Xian consciousness is also praised as having sublime morality. The caring for families is evolved to succor the people from the same place. Lin's elaboration of how the family system develops the village system, which is the factor engendering Chinese collectiveness, demonstrates that this mechanism has a function in governing the Chinese people's daily affairs. The family system, in association with the village system, knits a big net in which the Han people are caught and have to conform to all the values and conventions derived from the family-village hierarchy. This "unseen" social mechanism is the root of collectiveness. The consciousness of Tong Xian has been internalized by the Chinese. Conceivably, this internalization has accelerated the formation of collectiveness as one crucial Chinese national identity.

The deep-rooted factor causing the collectiveness of the Chinese people is this family-village system, which also produces other cultural phenomena. It can be observed that many Chinese social characteristics are derived from this overwhelmingly influential family-village system. Chinese characteristics such as face, favor, privilege, gratitude, courtesy, official corruption, philanthropy and hospitality are all undergirded by the family and village system for the reason that the family system nourishes the family mind, which is the basis of the rise of the village system (Lin 2002: 172). The village system is the origin of certain laws of social behavior. This research will study these

forms of social behavior in *The Woman Warrior* and see how the Han people "behave as a social being in the absence of a social mind" (Lin 2002: 172–173).

However, the wide-spread nation-wide influence of the family-village system, which shapes particular Chinese identities, proves that, under the governance of this system, social attitudes emerge that make the Chinese accustomed to behave with the consideration of the consciousness of collectivity. Understandably, the group activities governed by the family-village system, combined with conforming to the Chinese cultural norms such as face, favor, and honor, are represented and defended. For instance, all villagers protect the fame of their village, which is usually perceived as protecting the "face" of the village, but also can be interpreted as "normal" action under the manipulation of the family-village system. The portrayal of this Chinese image in *The Woman Warrior* is basically through the 'I' narrator's narration of lives and activities of the Chinese, in particular, these immigrants in China-town, which will be examined later.

3.1.3 Filial Piety

Filial piety is a virtue, which the Chinese highly esteem in deference to the Confucian philosophy of respect for the elders. In Confucian philosophy, filial piety is held above all the other virtues. Due to the prevailing impact of the Confucian philosophy, the Chinese people hold this consciousness as well as the concept of harmony. Filial piety can be understood as Charlotte (2004: 3) writes:

> The most basic meaning of the concept of filial piety is succinctly illustrated by the Chinese character *xiao* 孝, which is used to write it. (The same ideograph with the same meaning is used in Korean and Japanese with different pronunciations). Chinese is privileged here because it is the language of the original Confucian writings that serve as the concept's ideological basis.) The character *xiao* is composed from two other characters: the top half of the character *lao* (old) and the character *zi* (son). When combined to constitute *xiao*, the element derived from *lao* rests on top of the character *zi*, that is, the "elder" is on top of the "son." This ideograph conveys multiple messages of which the officially preferred one is that the old are supported by the young.

The above illustration displays that the relationship between the elders and younger people also conforms to the patriarchal hierarchy. As the Chinese character shows, the

young generation is under the control of the elders and protected by them. Furthermore, they also need to respect and support the elders, which is the basic principle of filial piety.

In addition, there are many criteria to regulate and conduct filial behavior. *Classic of Xiào* (or *Classic of Filial Piety*), demonstrates that the basic filial behavior for sons and daughters are: "in serving his parents, a filial son reveres them in daily life; he makes them happy while he nourishes them; he takes anxious care of them in sickness; he shows great sorrow over their death; and he sacrifices to them with solemnity" (quoted in Charlotte 2004: 3). This example contains the six principles advocated by Confucianism. Confucianism as the preferred ideology employed by the ruling class since the Han dynasty became the dominant authority in Chinese culture and society.

Moreover, in the *Classic of Filial Piety*, filial piety is defined as a conduct and norm which should be conformed to and executed by the ruling class in a different manner (Wei 2009: 32). That is to say, officials (in Yamen, the government office in feudal China) should have allegiance to the emperor; disloyalty to the emperor is perceived as disobeying the norm of filial piety. However, it is not necessary to explain what exactly these filial piety norms are and in what way they function as the ethical norm for the emperor and his officials. This thesis is concerned much more about how the common Chinese practice filial piety.

Apart from the *Classic of Filial Piety* supporting the patriarchy, *Nu-hisao ching* (*Classic on Filial Piety for Woman*) was written in the Tang dynasty to record the treatises regulating women's behavior. However, no matter how similar *the Classic of Filial Piety* and *Nu-hisao ching* are both in content and structure, the patriarchal foundations of Confucianism of both books reveal that women in feudal China could not get the equal positions and rights as men in the status of remarriage and were still in a subordinated status in terms of material conditions, although women were acknowledged as equal as man in their capacities of becoming a well-cultivated person (Woo 2002: 141). From a postcolonial and feminist perspective, both the *Classic of Filial Piety* and *Nu-hisao ching* deliberately overlook women's subjectivity in society,

which conform to the notion of "masculine" culture and solidify the normality and authority of patriarchal hierarchy.

Filial piety as an ideology, social convention or ethic is mostly advocated by Confucianism. Due to the wide influence of Confucianism, it has become a social norm in several East Asian and South Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore, although the practices of filial piety differ in these countries compared to its practice in China. Today, the Chinese people do not strictly conform to the obsolete doctrine of filial piety such as junior members of the family not being able to travel far away from home. This concept is deeply rooted in Chinese culture as well as Chinese collectiveness. Even in today's circumstance, the values of filial piety are acknowledged by Chinese society, not only in Old China. Therefore, filial piety as both the discursive strategy written in *Classic of Xiao* and *Nu-hisao ching* and the practice of the general populace can be perceived as one of the definers of Chinese national identity. Brave Orchid, educated in Chinese culture, who has taught her child, the 'I' narrator, the story of Hua Mu Lan, actually practices the teaching of filial piety portrayed in *The Woman Warrior*, which will be examined later.

3.1.4 Indirectness

It quite often occurs for foreigners to encounter a situation where Chinese say the opposite when they are praised. Under the circumstance of being praised that "your English is good", many Chinese people answer "no, my English is not so good" or "it is just so-so", if they are modest and don't communicate in an Occidental way. Thus the question is raised whether some Chinese are too modest. A century ago, Arthur Smith (1894: 65) remarked on the indirectness of the Chinese in this way: "it is an example of the Chinese talent for indirection, that owing to their complex ceremonial code one is able to show great disrespect for another by methods which to us seem preposterously oblique." In Arthur Smith's sense, the Chinese cultural convention causes talking among the Chinese, which often makes foreigners who usually express their ideas directly confused.

The distinct communication style of the Chinese people constructs the Chinese image as mysterious, unfathomable, inexplicable and inscrutable. All of these familiar

descriptions demonstrate various aspects of Chinese culture. However, underlying these cultural aspects is the Chinese philosophy towards life and humanity. Giving a negative answer or talking in circles does not mean that a person really thinks that he or she is not good at speaking English. However, to say "No" is perceived as modest, a virtue acknowledged by the Chinese. To a certain extent, to say "No" is a kind of self-negation. The self-negation would remind the Chinese that they still need an effort to forge ahead with English-learning. Linda W.L. Young (1994: 19), researching Sino-American communication, points out that directness as the basic communication norm is based on an Occidental cultural convention. According to her (1994: 19), the information given by languages in Asia and Africa is much more inclined to construct the communicative norm as indirect.

In terms of Chinese identities, Chinese people are perceived as holding the concept of harmony and practicing this discipline as a love of nature. Besides this, the Chinese people are collective, a practice which is derived from the social mechanism of the family-village system. Moreover, deeply influenced by Taoist and Confucian philosophy, the Chinese also have these characteristics, which include filial piety, and indirectness.

3.2 American Identities

American individualism and its striving for a democratic society are prestigious (Zhao 2002: 40). It is important to explore what the American Dream means, because America attracts so many immigrants who attempt to realize their various dreams. Robert H. Fossum and John K. Roth (1986) interpret the American Dream as follows:

> Although the foregoing descriptions capture some of the ideals—equality, liberty, prosperity, opportunity, public virtue—commonly associated with the American Dream, they omit others which have been equally influential. Furthermore, their very reliance on abstractions reduces complexity to a misleading simplicity. For the Dream is and always has been comprised of many dreams; no single vision has ever totally dominated the American imagination.

The American Dream cannot be simple: it has abundant connotations. However, these ideals listed above inspire the new immigrants who set up their home and life in this

new country. As time goes by, the contents of the ideals in terms of the American dream changed a lot. Does the American Dream represent "Americanness"? According to Jim Cullen (2003), the American Dream remains a major element of American national identity, although American national identities have much more uncertainties than ever before. Before stressing the American Dream with its connotations of the identities of the American people, the controversial issue concerning the "uncertainty" of national identities should be elucidated. Generally speaking, the organic existence of national identities for a nation like America is quite controversial and uncertain. It is difficult to find a consensus about identities among this multi-cultural society. However, the examination of the American identities can be accessible through the lens of "otherness". For instance, the Americans do not support the ideology of communism in political stance. Therefore, the American Dream with its connotations exclusively marks Americans out from other nations. In this sense, the analysis of the American identities will be concentrated on the interpretation of the crucial ideals of the American Dream. Within the limited scope of this thesis, the features of the American Dream in different historical periods cannot be displayed one by one. However, the most representative features and major strands of American Dream will be discussed.

Firstly, the American Dream stands for rugged individualism, which is interpreted by Fossum and Roth (1986: 27) as "the presumption that Americans can solve any problem. A 'can do' confidence, a disposition to 'get on with it,' has characterized their psychological tone." It is easy to understand that the forerunners of Americans bring industrialization to this place and fight against colonization, gaining the independence, which signifies a new country being founded in this world. To have a short review of the important American historical events, the confidence mentioned by Fossum and Roth is related to freedom of choice (1986: 27):

> Mixed with the sentiment that Americans are a chosen people, however, has always been a strong sense that much does depend on what individuals resolve or on what group decisions mandate. If Americans sometimes try to have things both ways—personal responsibility and deterministic assurance of a favourable destiny—the prevailing mood during the past century (at least until quite recently) has tipped to the side of freedom of choice.

In Fossum and Roth's opinions, the American individual's responsibility and deterministic assurance of a favourable destiny convey the unique merit of the Americans, freedom of choice. As mentioned above, the independence of America and the civil war are both the embodiment of the essence of the American spirit. However, in contemporary, this spirit has its new meanings. In the 1930s, the American depression had deep influences either on the entire American economy or their psychology. On the basis of the prominent American novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), Fossum and Roth analyse the meaning of the old American beliefs, the American Dream. In a broad sense, the majority of the working class represent the old belief and attempt to reach out their dreams as they demonstrate (1986: 23–24):

> To John Steinbeck, whose novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is the most moving fictional document of the period, the ultimate machine was American capitalism itself. In taking monopolistic control of land and the means of production, capitalism had rendered American individualism obsolete, made a mockery of opportunity, and reduced an entire class to a condition of impotent slavery. The only answer, as Steinbeck saw it, was for working men to organize themselves into a body as cohesive and powerful as that of corporate ownership itself—in short, to strengthen the labor unions, Before that class-consciousness could develop, however, they had to recognize as illusions those American dreams which told them that any man willing to work could find work; that ambition, industriousness, and competence inevitably brought success; and that in a land of plenty, especially in the lush Canaan of California, no one could possibly go hungry. Steinbeck's dispossessed Dust Bowl farmers eventually abandon their illusions and extend their concept of family to include everyone who shares their plight. Yet they, and obviously Steinbeck himself, retain other long-standing American beliefs: a belief in the essential goodness and rationality of the common man; a belief in his ability to govern himself, either to correct his institutions or to overturn them; and a belief that those who live close to nature are spiritually nourished by it. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, the old dream of a more perfect union, so to speak, still lives.

Contemporary American novels deal with the American people's dreams in various periods with different interpretations justifying the feature of freedom of choice. Therefore, American Dream in terms of rugged individualism has two meanings: confident self-reliance and freedom of choice.

Secondly, the American Dream has the connotation of the good life. Jim Cullen points out that dreaming of a good life has three interpretations for Americans (2003). The first is spiritually dreaming of finding a brand new free land where it is much more tolerant

toward different religious believers. For example, the Puritans come to America for surviving. The second metaphor is dreaming of upward mobility, and the last one is dreaming of the Coast, which designates coming to California where various American Dreams are realized. The American Dream as interpreted as upward mobility is of vital significance in this thesis, regardless of the other two meanings. In illustrating upward mobility, Jim Cullen uses Abraham Lincoln as an example as he (2003: 89) asserts:

> For Lincoln, the Declaration affirmed the truth that the Good Life was good not only for the people enjoying the fruits of their labor but also good in the sense of doing so in a morally legitimate way. This was the essence of the Dream of Upward mobility as good life as he understood it.

From this point of view, it is fairly to assert that every human being has the motivation and the right to change or promote their situations, which include both economical and moral factors. More significantly, they also endeavor to gain the ultimate aim that is self-realization. However, beyond the basic effort of striving for oneself, upward mobility indicates an explicit pragmatic meaning, which is to control one's own life. In other words, that is to master one's own destiny. Cullen (2003: 79) suggests that "The great thing about the United States is that where there was a will, there was a way." The relationship between striving for one's self and mastering one's own destiny is mutual coexistence. These are two major elements of upward mobility elaborated by Cullen.

So far, the thesis has dealt with the American Dream as rugged individualism and good life, which are also described as freedom of choice and upward mobility, which are seen in terms of self-reliance and mastering one's own destiny. Even though rugged individualism and upward mobility are interwoven with each other in those connotations which designate the materialistic aspects of human life, they differ in some respects. For example, rugged individualism emphasizes one's own courage and capacity to accomplish and undertake in a resolute manner under the premise of being freedom to choose. Upward mobility as a metaphor of the good life attaches much importance to its general meaning of obtaining a good social economic status which is said to transform or promote one's life through personal hard work, effortless striving and the intelligible cognition of mastering one's own destiny.

4 “DOUBLENESS” Of THE ‘I’ NARRATOR IN THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHINESE AND AMERICAN IDENTITIES

This chapter examines two aims raised in the introduction part. Firstly, it deals with the analysis of the ‘I’ narrator’s cultural construction of her hyphenated identity as Chinese-American with the application of the postcolonial approach in association with the feminist approach which undergirds the analysis of the “doubleness” of the ‘I’ narrator. As to the order of deciphering the formation of hyphenated identity, the ‘I’ narrator’s new “self-image” as the sign of female subjectivity will be investigated from a feminist angle, which precedes the postcolonial examination of the ‘I’ narrator’s hybridity. Secondly, the Chinese and American identities based on the presentation of the ‘I’ narrator will be examined in detail in an imagological sense.

4.1 Wandering In-Between

> Whenever she had to warn us about life, my mother told stories that ran like this one, a story to grow up on. She tested our strength to establish realities. Those in the emigrant generations who could not reassert brute survival died young and far from home. Those of us in the first American generations have had to figure out how the invisible world the emigrants built around our childhoods fits in solid America. (Kingston 1981: 13)

It is the ‘I’ narrator’s confusion towards her fellow Chinese immigrants, who establish an ‘unseen’ world for the American-born Chinese children in this quotation. Born in America, the ‘I’ narrator directly raises the question that she cannot tell what is China and Chinese culture, because China is so remote and it can only be imagined on the basis of her mother’s stories. The first confusion about Chinese culture, which is perceived as inscrutable and ambiguous is generated by the story of the no name aunt because the ‘I’ narrator is often warned about her by her mother. The aunt’s name is forbidden to be mentioned, which is incomprehensible for her. This encounter enables the American-born narrator to ponder (Kingston 1981: 13):

> Chinese-Americans, when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to childhood, to poverty, insanities, one family, your mother who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what is the movie.

The ‘I’ narrator explicitly points out that she is Chinese-American but still doubts what the real Chinese cultural features which make up her Chinese identity are. For the narrator who was born in America, far from China where Chinese culture is cultivated and nourished, everything conveyed by her parents and fellow Chinese is inscrutable and imperceptible. Therefore, she has formed this consciousness that she seems like a spectator who watches these Chinese immigrants practice Chinese culture. However, she is also an actor simultaneously because her Chinese descendant identity has marked her off from other ethnic Americans. Whether she is the actor or the audience, as an in-between she is always confronted with the question to what extent she possesses Chinese identities. On such an occasion, the concerned identity issue “who am I?” is generated (Kingston 1981: 150):

> Reading out loud was easier than speaking because we did not have to make up what to say, but I stopped often, and the teacher would think I’d gone quiet again. I could not understand ‘I’. The Chinese ‘I’ has seven strokes, intricacies. How could the American ‘I’, assuredly wearing a hat like the Chinese, have only three strokes, the middle so straight? Was is out of politeness that this writer left off strokes the way a Chinese has to write her own name small and crooked? No, it was not politeness; ‘I’ is a capital and ‘you’ is a lower-case. I stared at that middle line and waited so long for its black centre to resolve into tight strokes and dots that I forgot to pronounce it. The other troublesome word was ‘here’, no strong consonant to hang on to, and so flat, when ‘here’ is two mountainous ideographs. The teacher, who had already told me every day how to read ‘I’ and ‘here’, put me in the low corner under the stairs again, where the noisy boys usually sat.

The above narration of the ‘I’ narrator undoubtedly expresses her feeling about the language difference between the Chinese and the American. The figurative speech of the above portrayal of the language variations “proves” that the Chinese and American cultures are complex and simple respectively, according to the observations of the ‘I’ narrator, who is confused about the different spellings of ‘I’ in two languages. However, she is confused about herself because there are two different selves: one is the American ‘I’ and the other is the Chinese ‘I’. As the spelling of the American character ‘I’ demonstrates, the American ‘self’ is straight forward and can be understood easily. On the other hand, her “Chineseness”, like the Chinese character ‘I’, is complicated. Therefore, the question is raised how the simple American ‘I’ could become the intricate Chinese ‘I’. Thus, the identity issue concerns to what extent the ‘I’ is American and to what extent it is Chinese. Apart from the recognition of the variation of the two

‘I’, the unresolved question about “here” is raised because the ‘I’ narrator’s is also confused about where she should be. As well as the confusion about the ‘I’, referring to herself, the different spellings of “here” imply that she is lost even though she knows how to read the ‘I’ and “here”. The Chinese culture behind the smoke screen and the easy perceptible American culture collide with each other, producing the result that the ‘I’ narrator is dislocated because she is in-between. Moreover, Brave Orchid’s stories happened in distant old China obfuscate the narrator’s perception of Chinese culture. The gap between the “real” Chinese culture and its practice in America dislocates the narrator because she is forced to meditate and clarify the “essence” of Chinese culture. The uncertainty about the “essence” of Chinese culture causes her mental diaspora. Therefore, the emergence of the situation of in-between makes it necessary for the ‘I’ narrator to find out who she is and where she should be. The related issue of how the ‘I’ narrator constructs her identity will be investigated below.

The ‘I’ narrator has formed her own identities step by step. To elucidate the identity formation process, the application of combined method is postcolonial approach incorporated with the feminist criticism. Whichever is employed, there is no contradiction but correlated. Firstly, it will be analyzed from the feminist angle to research the formation of the ‘I’ narrator’s identity. Then, postcolonial perspectives will be applied to explain how the ‘I’ narrator constructs her hyphenated identity. From the critical point of view, the combination of these two approaches can enable the analysis of the ‘I’ narrator’s own identity formation to achieve comprehensive illustration, which is persuasive and reliable.

First, findings will be presented on the gendered expectations of the ‘I’ narrator in *The Woman Warrior* and how the ‘I’ narrator negotiates these gendered expectations of Chinese and the American culture in constructing her own national identity through the new female subjectivity. According to Desiree Baolian Qin (2009: 38), “gender offers an important conceptual lens for continuities and discontinuities for cultural norms and values in different developmental contexts for immigrant adolescents.” This assertion explicitly demonstrates that the cultures differ in displaying its gender norms and values. Moreover, Qin states, “for an immigrant adolescent, ethnic identity is often linked to gendered identity. Femininity and Masculinity are culturally constructed” (2009: 38). In

Qin's sense, an individual's ethnicity can be observed from his or her gendered expectations and performance. Thus, based on the view that gender identity is correlated to the individual's ethnic identity, the examination of the 'I' narrator's national identity will be justified through the analysis of her perspectives of gendered performance and the construction of her own gender identities.

In stressing gender identity, the relevant binary of femininity and masculinity is an inevitable issue. As mentioned above, gendered expectations of a culture do embody the norms and values of this culture. The 'I' narrator is in-between these two cultures, a person who has certainly assimilated two cultural views towards the woman and the meaning of femininity and masculinity, which has greatly influenced the formation of her hyphenated identity. There are two processes for the 'I' narrator to establish her new female subjectivity. The first refers to the emergence of the recognition that traditional femininity is the main quality of the Chinese women, which means that the gendered expectations for the Chinese women are the conventional feminine. The 'I' narrator gains this consciousness step by step because she is exposed to the stories of the no name woman, Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid and fellow Chinese immigrants' attitudes towards women.

Here, it will discuss the Chinese cultural expectations of women as feminine presented in *The Woman Warrior* prior to the analysis of the second process in order to understand why it is necessary to establish a new female subjectivity. As mentioned in the introduction, women are overlooked and almost excluded from the hierarchy of the five constant virtues. In *The Woman Warrior*, there are many descriptions of how women have very low social and family status and conform to the norms and regulations imposed on them. The Chinese women are submissive and rarely get respect from the family and society except those elder women. For the 'I' narrator, this cognition is built little by little based on her mother's stories. The tragic story of the no-name aunt makes the 'I' narrator realize that women's value is merely the "tool" to give birth and the virginity of women is also related to the honor of the whole family. Worse than the death, the aunt's name is deleted from the genealogy and forgotten intentionally by all the families. The punishment is not only executed by these villagers' destroying the home but also exists after her death. It can be observed that women's status and

situation are execrable in old China. It is the first time that the ‘I’ narrator gets to know how Chinese society treated women who disobeyed the social norms, which could not be forgiven easily by the Chinese.

The second impressive experience of Chinese cultural norms regulating the women’s behavior is through Moon Orchid’s story. Moon Orchid presents another submissive weak image of Chinese women to the ‘I’ narrator. Chinese culture cultivated women so feminine that women in China were totally without individuality and controlled by men. If the no-name aunt’s story is just raising the ‘I’ narrator’s questioning and confusion about women situations in China, then Moon Orchid’s case exemplifies the patriarchal power of Chinese culture. The portrayal of the no-name aunt and Moon Orchid’s experiences substantiate the way that women were expected obey and be submissive to men. There was seldom self-esteem for the Chinese women, which implies the Chinese women’s lack of subjectivity.

The two women relatives’ examples build the foundation of the Chinese women images. Through the narration of these two stories, the ‘I’ narrator starts her deciphering process of gendered expectations of Chinese culture. There are various indications that the ‘I’ narrator recognizes that women in Old China were overlooked. The role of women or girls in China is merely “wife” or “servant”. By contrast, American women have personal pursuits of studying, career and family, with many choices and more confidence in society. However, in the family, the information conveyed by the narrator’s parents is that a girl is “useless”: “When one of my parents or the emigrant villagers said, ‘“feeding girls is feeding cowbirds,”’ I would thrash on the floor and scream so hard I couldn’t talk. I couldn’t stop.” (Kingston 1981: 48) The reaction of the ‘I’ narrator is understandable because any person would be heartbroken when they heard that they had no more value than cowbirds. Moreover, her parents and the fellow villager criticize her reaction as bad: “‘what’s the matter with her?’ ‘I don’t know. Bad, I guess. You know girls are. “There’s no profit in raising girls. Better to raise geese than girls.” (Kingston 1981: 48) How ruthless and indifferent comment it is. Raising girls is perceived as raising children for strangers because girls will finally get married with someone else, which is described as the “outward tendency” (Kingston 1981: 48). In

order to persuade her parents to trust her having no "outward tendency", the narrator even attempts to stop getting straight "As" in school (Kingston 1981: 49).

Through the exposure to the Chinese culture in treating girls, the 'I' narrator feels very bad and is worried about her situation. It often occurs in her dream that a new born girl baby is killed by their parents. She is always in fear that her parents will sell her to get the money for maintaining their living in America. This impression and feeling of fear is based on Brave Orchid's previous midwife experience in China. The excerpt shows the inhuman treatment towards girls in China (Kingston 1981: 82):

> I hope this holeless baby proves that my mother did not prepare a box of clean ashes beside the birth bed in case of a girl. 'The midwife or a relative would take the back of a girl baby's head in her hand and turn her face into the ashes,' said my mother. 'It was very easy.' She never said she herself killed babies, but perhaps the holeless baby was a boy.

The inhuman killing of the baby in China presented above is the causation of the 'I' narrator's fear. This example reveals that girls were considered useless in Old China, even though infanticide was considered immoral. Nonetheless, the 'I' narrator realizes that in patriarchal China, the establishment of human right for girls and women was impossible. Thus, the fear for her parents and villagers is deeply rooted for the narrator. The killed baby always appeared as split and horrified in her dream. This bad treatment of girls and women create the passive impression of the 'I' narrator towards Chinese culture. Moreover, "There is a Chinese word for the female I—which is 'slave'. Break the women with their own tongues!" (Kingston 1981: 49) In such a situation, Chinese women had no power to speak out with their own voices, which shows how Chinese women are despised by male and authoritative patriarchal power. Therefore, the Chinese culture is perceived as the masculine culture because men are much more ambitious and competitive than women in society. The gendered expectations of Chinese culture for women are undoubtedly the conventional feminine style, which requires women to be submissive to the men with no individuality. In short, through the understanding of the Chinese women who play relatively inferior roles in society, the 'I' narrator gets to know that as Chinese, in particular, a woman, she should be feminine, which means that she should be submissive, regardless of her personal will and

subjectivity. Consequently, the ‘I’ narrator has formed an awareness that the Chinese women are dependent on men.

However, the ‘I’ narrator has been born in America, where she observes the different expectations of the gendered performance for girls which is totally the opposite of Chinese cultural expectations. Thus, the ‘I’ narrator is thrown into a mire of agony in which she tries to find equilibrium. The mentioned example that the narrator even tries to stop getting straight “As” is actually in order to satisfy the Chinese cultural expectations of women’s gendered behavior, which are to be an other’s wife regardless of their personal pursuits. Obviously, as educated in American culture, the ‘I’ narrator definitely cannot give up her Americanized gendered expectations. Therefore, the second process is to reconstruct her own identities which show her own expectations of gendered behavior is an appropriate way of “locating” herself.

The process of reconstructing her own identity, which designates her own interpretations of the gendered expectations, is through adapting the heroine image of Hua Mu Lan. In the story “White Tigers”, the ‘I’ narrator has become a warrior like the balladry heroine. In order to renew her image signifying her identities, Hua Mu Lan in this fiction has been recast as “masculine”, competitive and being equal with men. With respect to these three aspects, the ‘I’ narrator attempts to express her own identity. Firstly, it is necessary to analyze how the ‘I’ narrator constructs her equal position to men in *The Woman Warrior*. There is a description of the ‘I’ narrator achieving her success as a martial artist where her parents prepare a small celebration for welcoming her back, which usually reserved for men: “My parents killed a chicken and steamed it whole, as if they were welcoming home a son, but I had gotten out of the habit of meat.” (Kingston 1981: 37–38) Through this portrayal of her parents’ attitudes, the ‘I’ narrator is definitely acknowledged by her parents that she is important and deserves treatment as good as the men. Subsequently, the ‘I’ narrator goes into the army and gradually she has her own team to fight the enemy and the inept emperor. In wartime, the ‘I’ narrator becomes a strong fighter (Kingston 1981: 41):

> My first opponent turned out to be a giant, so much bigger than the toy general I used to peep at. During the charge, I singled out the leader, who grew as her ran towards me. Our eyes clocked until his height made me strain my neck looking up,

> my throat so vulnerable to the stroke of a knife that my eyes dropped to the secret death points on the huge body. First I cut off his leg with one sword swipe, as Chen Luan-feng had chopped the leg off the thunder god. When the giant stumped towards me, I cut off his head. Instantly he reverted to his true self, a snake, and slithered away hissing. The fighting around me stopped as the combatants' eyes and mouths opened wide in amazement. The giant's spells now broken, his soldiers, seeing that they had been led by a snake, pledged their loyalty to me.

This fight is between the 'I' narrator and the giant. The result demonstrates that the 'I' narrator is strong, "masculine" and competitive as well as man. Confronted by the giant, the narrator shows her dauntless courage and also gains the others' submission and loyalty. The overwhelmingly "masculinity" of the narrator is to display that women can also be as strong as men can or even much stronger. Furthermore, the narrator's "masculinity" is also demonstrated as she avenges the baron, saving the villagers from the serious situation as a great heroine that she, a girl can also achieved the accomplishments as man (Kingston 1981: 46–47):

> 'You've done this,' I said, and ripped off my shirt to show him my back. 'You are responsible for this.' When I saw his startled eyes at my breasts, I slashed him across the face and on the second stroke cut off his head. […] I searched the house, hunting out people for trial. I came upon a locked room. When I broke down the door, I found women, cowering, whimpering women. I heard shrill insect noises and scurrying. They blinked weakly at me like pheasants that have been raised in the dark for soft meat. The servants who walked the ladies had abandoned them, they could not escape on their little bound feet. Some crawled away from me, using their elbows to pull themselves along. These women would not be good for anything. I called the villagers to come identify any daughters they wanted to take home, but no one claimed any. I gave each woman a bagful of rice, which they sat on. They rolled the bags to the road. They wandered away like ghosts. Later, it would be said, they turned into the band of swordswomen who were a mercenary army. They did not wear men's clothes like me, but rode as women in black and red dresses. They bought up girl babies so that many poor families welcomed their visitations. When the slave girls and daughters-in-law ran away, people would say they joined these witch amazons. They killed men and boys. I myself never encountered such women and could not vouch for their reality.

This excerpt portrays the 'I' narrator as the redeemer of the oppressed women. Even though they are saved, the narrator cannot guarantee that they will be the warrior like her. Compared to these homeless women, she is portrayed as independent, "masculine", ambitious and competitive heroine. Investigating her gendered performance, the narrator finally achieves the object that her gendered behavior is totally the opposite of

the Chinese women, who are submissive and weak in a very feminine way. The gendered portrayal of the narrator as "masculine" makes her gender identity ambiguous and unrecognizable if on the basis of the Chinese cultural expectations of women as feminine. To identify the narrator's gender performance here, it is necessary to mention the issue of the gender identity in a limited scope. From a feminist perspective, Judith Butler (1999: 33) writes:

> It is assumed that gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be perfomative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed.

Therefore, the 'I' narrator, as a matter of fact, as the subject, performs her gender which is "masculine" presented in *The Woman Warrior*. The creative new image of the 'I' narrator in Hua Mu Lan thus reflects her attempt to achieve an equal position to men. The above illustration presents the narrator's ideology that women can also gain great accomplishments, in order to reclassify and redefine her own gender identities. Moreover, when women request not only the independent status, but also the emancipation from the solid authoritative patriarchal hierarchy, which restrains them as feminine, they desire to have an individual life in which they are in the dominant position, taking full control of the family and their career. The narrator has a perfect marriage and comes back to hometown with big fame. This is the ideal life that she looks forward to owning. Therefore, she not only reverses the traditional image of Hua Mu Lan and subverts the Chinese women as submissive and feminine, but also endows the Chinese women with new gendered identities that is liberal and individual. Moreover, she constructs herself as Hua Mu Lan, who actually performs gender. The 'I' narrator, Hua Mu Lan has inherited the masculine power and takes revenge on the baron, a different narrative from the legendary depiction of Hua Mu Lan, who is mostly praised for her filial piety and loyalty to the emperor. However, the 'I' narrator, who attempts to reconstruct the female subjectivity, has transgressed the practice of filial piety of Hua Mu Lan. It has been mentioned that officials had to conform to the filial piety in patriarchal Old china, which means that they owe allegiance to the emperor.

However, in “White Tigers”, Hua Mu Lan, as narrator’s surrogate, subverted the old emperor and supports the new emperor embodying the establishment of her female powerful subjectivity in the sense that she has the authority of choosing the patriarch of the hierarchy, which actually results in her dialectic fulfillment of the patriarchal filial piety. On one hand, she is against the “patriarch”, the old emperor; on the other hand, she practices in conformity with the patriarchal expectations of filial piety.

In short, the ‘I’ narrator constructs her image as strong, competitive, independent and also filial. These double-gendered identities as both feminine and masculine are the way to express her identities. The narrator makes every effort to establish equilibrium between the Chinese cultural and American cultural expectations of gendered identities. Compared to submissive Chinese women in inferior status, American women are much more independent and happy because they accept less pressure from the patriarchal restraint and much less discrimination in society. As the narrator “in-between” the two cultures, two kinds of gendered expectations have to be reconciled. The feminist gendered expectations of humanity are as in Judith Butler’s sense that “ gender rejects all versions of essential femininity or masculinity and also suggests that there is no singular, true gender definition but instead it is ‘fractured, contradictory and produced within social practices” (quoted in Campbell & Kean 2008: 226). Thus, through the lens of the construction of the narrator’s double and blurred gendered expectations as feminine and masculine, she reconstructs her own hyphenated identity as Chinese-American.

Secondly, from a postcolonial perspective analyzing the hyphenated identity formation of the ‘I’ narrator, she is doubly marginalized by these two cultures to a certain extent. Obviously, because the ‘I’ narrator is a girl, not a son, she is despised by the Chinese, who prefer boys to girls. Even in America, these Chinese immigrants still hold the concept that boys are more valuable than girls. This consciousness is seldom changed, as the ‘I’ narrator depicts (Kingston 1981: 48):

> ‘Come, children. Hurry. Hurry. Who wants to go out with Great-Uncle?’ On Saturday mornings my great-uncle, the ex-river pirate, did the shopping- ‘Get your coats, whoever’s coming.’ ‘I’m coming. I’m coming. Wait for me.’ When he heard girls’ voices, he turned on coats back up, not looking at one another. The

> boys came back with candy and new toys. When they walked through Chinatown, the people must have said 'A boy-and another boy- and another boy!' At my great-uncle's funeral I secretly tested out feeling that he was dead- the six-foot bearish masculinity of him.

The 'I' narrator experiences this unpleasant neglect from her uncle, who holds obsolete idea. This emotional hurt cannot be consoled until she finally knows her uncle's death. Her awareness of this attitude is not based on occasional encounter with the unfair treatment between boys and girls, but on the ground of long time observation of the attitudes of Chinese immigrants. *The Woman Warrior* provides a full description of 'girls' as less significant and valuable than boys. If Brave Orchid's stories construct the image of women's inferior and worthless in remote and old China, then, the narrator born in America once again witnesses the discrimination between girls and boys (Kinston 1981: 171–172):

> Third Grand-Uncle finally did get a boy, though, his only great-grandson. The boy's parents and the old man bought him not homemade diapers, not bread bags. They gave him a full-month party inviting all the emigrant villagers; they deliberately hadn't given the girls parties, so than not one would notice another girl. Their brother got toy trucks that were big enough to climb inside. When he grew older, he got a bicycle and let the girls play with his old tricycle and wagon. My mother bought his sisters a typewriter. 'They can be clerk-typists,' their father kept saying, but he would not buy them a typewriter.

Evidently, the grand-uncle treats the great-grandson very well. However, the uncle is stingy to his daughters, thinking that girls only deserve old and used things. her relatives' different treatment of boys and girls makes her realize that girls cannot get equal positions in the family. Much worse than being identified as useless, the Chinese immigrants' conservative consciousness becomes an obstacle to her pursuit of college study. In the fifth story, "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe", she writes that her parents recommended her to be a typist, which is perceived as an appropriate job for girls, if a woman wants to go to work. The Chinese traditional concept is that the girl is just to be the "helpful wife and wise mother" (Lin 1935: 155). However, the 'I' narrator is encouraged by her American teacher that she is capable of gaining a scholarship to college rather than to work as a typist. Therefore, it is obvious that the low expectation of the family and the fellow Chinese has marginalized her.

Compared to her marginalization in the Chinese community, the narrator is also overlooked or despised by the white community. The narrator is always forced to get the candy from the drug store because it has mistakenly delivered the medicine to her family, an act that is perceived as a sign of bringing the bad fortune: the only way to avoid misfortune is to get candy from there. However, when she comes to the drug store asking for it, she is perceived as a beggar due to her bad English and unintelligible request. Undoubtedly, her self-esteem has been hurt. The drug shopkeeper gives the candy to her out of sympathy. However, this deed has made the 'I' narrator extremely uncomfortable so that she walks around avoiding of being seen by the owner. If this annoying and distressing experience makes her be looked down upon by the White people due to the failure of communication, then the discriminate words really cause her anger and rage (Kingston 1981: 50):

> I once worked at an art supply house that sold paints to artists. 'Order more of that nigger yellow, willya?' the boss told me. 'Bright, isn't it? Nigger yellow.' 'I don't like that word,' I had to say in my bad, small-person's voice that makes no impact. The boss never deigned to answer.

The expression "nigger yellow" shows her boss's contemptuous attitudes toward Asian-Americans. However, as an employee, she has to bear this discriminatory appellation. On the basis of the above examples, it is implied that the narrator as a Chinese descendant in America, is discriminated against and marginalized by the White dominant community. Moreover, it also shows that urban renewal has torn down the laundry where the narrator's family has toiled for seventeen years. The Chinese immigrant's rights and properties are not protected in America, which has forced her to gain the awareness those Chinese immigrants as "minorities" have little power in America.

It is clear that the narrator has been confronted with this double-marginalized situation. As Chinese-American woman, she tries to figure out how to survive and speak out with her own voices in this situation in order to confirm her own identities. It is argued by Yuan Yuan (1999: 299):

> Each ethnic group constructs a unique self-image that reflects its response to the impact of the dominant culture. Their reactions vary according to their different positions, to the social environments, and to the dominant value systems. The self

> that emerges can be defensive, aiming to preserve the original cultural values and keeping its alienation and marginality.

The mentioned defensive self-image can be employed to interrogate the double marginalized position and break the hegemony of white culture and Chinese patriarchal culture. Thus, it is understandable for the narrator to construct her ideal self-image to show her mediating stance. As doubly discriminated against, the process of reconstructing own identity is very challenging. As Bhabha (1997: 44–45) makes clear, three conditions that underlie an understanding of desire of reconstructing of one's own identity:

> Firstly, to exist is to be called into being in relation to an otherness, its look or locus; secondly, the very place of identification, caught in the tension of demand and desire, is a space of splitting; thirdly, the question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a self-fulfilling prophecy-it is always the production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image.

Bhabha's illustrations elucidate how to understand identity reconstruction, in particular the construction of hyphenated identity. Therefore, it is understandable that the narrator makes use of Hua Mu Lan and Ts'ai Yen assuming her self-image. Then, the portrayal of Hua Mu Lan and Ts'ai Yen in *The Woman Warrior* should be reexamined to demonstrate how the hyphenated identity is reconstructed from a postcolonial perspective.

As discussed in the previous analysis, Hua Mu Lan is represented in the book as "masculine", independent, but at the same time filial. Obviously, these new identities construct a new image, which is unrecognizable if only on the basis of the narration of the classic balladry. This literary "presence" of Hua Mu Lan conforms to Bhabha's comments on hybridity: "it is no longer a representation of an essence; it is now a partial presence, a (strategic) device in a specific colonial engagement, an appurtenance of authority." (1997: 114). The partial presence embodied by the new image of Hua Mu Lan is the good virtue of filial piety, if the Chinese patriarchal interpretation of it is set as the original "presence" or the "essence". Obviously, the new Hua Mu Lan has inherited this quality. In order to demonstrate that the narrator actually constructs her "Chineseness", the self-narration explains it as below (Kingston 1981: 53):

> The swordswoman and I are not so dissimilar. May my people understand the resemblance soon so that I can return to them. What we have in common are the words at our backs. The idioms for revenge are ‘report a crime’ and ‘report to five families’. The reporting is the vengeance-not the beheading, not the gutting, but the words. And I have so many words-‘chink’ words and ‘gook’ words too-that they do not fit on my skin.

The ‘I’ narrator endeavours to find the similarity between the swordswoman and herself in order to be acknowledged by the Chinese immigrants and fulfill her filiality. Moreover, she identifies herself as the famous general Yu Fei. As Yu Fei showing his patriot to the Han people, the narrator has to undertake the same duty of “revenge”. However, her revenge is to get back her family laundry rather than fighting against an invading nation (Kingston 1981: 49–50). Undoubtedly, the application of the “revenge” is mimicry. The object of assuming the new image of the swordswoman, or Hua Mu Lan in “White Tigers”, is to construct the narrator’s Chinese identity, which is actually not a pre-given, but intentionally, transformed. This quality embodied by the ‘I’ narrator is not the same as original Yu Fei’s patriotic spirit but is similar to its “essence”.

Moreover, the female subjectivity presented in “Whiter Tigers” possesses the trait of mimicry of the Chinese identity which is the narrator’s fulfillment of her filial obligations. From this point of view, it is argued by Shu Yuan that the depiction of the narrator as filial daughter conforms to the patriarchal values praised by the filial piety (2001: 210). However, there are also elements of individualism which are embodied in the description of love and marriage: “I would have for a new husband my own playmate, dear since childhood, who loved me so much he was to become a spirit bridegroom for my sake. We will be so happy when I came back to the valley, healthy and strong and not a ghost” (Kingston 1981: 37). To attain her own dream of being a wife and mother, the narrator romanticizes the woman warrior’s legend. “I hid from battle only once, when I gave birth to our baby. In dark and silver dream I had seen him falling from sky, each night closer to the earth, his soul a star. Just before the labor began, the last star rays sank into my belly” (Kingston 1981: 47). This poetic portrayal of the dream before giving birth romanticizes the ‘I’ narrator in conformity with the Chinese convention that some mothers will have a dream before giving birth. The juxtaposition of the ‘I’ narrator’s own individual perception towards love and marriage constructs a new image of Hua Mu Lan in “White Tigers”. Moreover, according to

Yuan Yuan (1999: 299), the narrator's perplexing identity obscures the "essence" of American culture or identity. Specifically speaking, her personal identity formation reveals those complex cultural transactions: her American identity is reinforced by Chinese mythology (Hua Mu Lan): even though Hua Mu Lan is to some extent related to category of the "other", she nevertheless functions as the ideological basis of the narrator's identity construction (1999: 299). Previously, the mimicry of the Chinese traditional values and cultural essence and the incorporation of the establishment of female subjectivity as "masculine", independent and authoritative designate the "split" essence of hybridity. The trait of "split" and partial "presence" of two identities are presented respectively as the Chinese patriarchal values of filial piety and American individuality. The construction of the new image of Hua Mu Lan represents the qualities of disjunctive and ambivalent hybridity. Bhabha (1997: 107) suggests that "the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference". In this sense, the presence of Hua Mu Lan in "White Tigers" embodies the trait of hybridity as ambivalent because both its representation of Chinese and American values and virtues are similar to the original identities but not the same. Moreover, through mimicry, "partial Chineseness" and "partial Americanness" are displayed as repetition. In a word, the new image of Hua Mu Lan designates hybridity, which is the consequence of mediation of two cultures for the 'I' narrator, who actually reconstructs her own national identity as hyphenated, Chinese-American.

The fifth story of *The Woman Warrior*, "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is another landmark of depicting the narrator as Chinese-American. It is an autobiographical narrative of the narrator in America, through which the analysis of the cultural construction of hyphenated identity is made much more tangible and accessible. At first, she confesses that she is not good at narration, in reference to the recollection that Brave Orchid once cut her tongue, as Sidonie Smith argues that the narrator is deprived of the subjectivity of speaking (1997: 1131). However, the reminiscence of the story occurred in her childhood, revealing her painful experience that she was incapable of speaking for one year and that the life in that period was a very dim picture drawn by her in elementary school, which is total "black" . The reason for the silence of the narrator is

that she cannot speak English. Therefore, to speak or not always perplexes her. She makes every effort to speak out in order to present herself and therefore studies very hard on the English course. However, psychologically, the embarrassing unspeakable experience has made her self-contemptuous. In order to get rid of the self-abased feeling, she attempts to succeed in speaking and shows no sympathy for those who cannot speak English because she ever abhorred and tortured her classmate, the "useless" and fragile Chinese-American girl. Argued by Smith, the image of this girl who is dumb and cannot speak English becomes a mirror image of the narrator (Smith 1997: 1132). This also reveals the narrator's lack of subjectivity to speak. To get a closer investigation of the "unspeakable" situation is actually the reflection of the dilemma confronted by the narrator, who is in a doubly marginalized situation. Much more severe than the neglect of the Chinese community is her encountering the pressure from mainstream culture. The dominant white culture is obviously the authority of American society. Chinese culture in America as minority culture is obviously in a subordinate position as a subaltern culture. As a member of the subaltern group, it is understandable that for the narrator to speak out over Chinese cultural manifestations is very difficult; as a result, she who is actually incapable of speaking is deprived of the right to "speak". However, in order to get the acknowledgement of society, establishment of a new self-image, which both contains the minority ethnic culture elements and the internalized mainstream cultural identities for these "in-between" diasporas' descendants, is very important. To resist white cultural authority, the 'I' narrator finally finds her way of speaking, through the new self-image designating her hyphenated identity, that is Ts'ai Yen.

Ts'ai Yen (177–?) was the daughter of Ts'ai Yung (133–192), a famous scholar, was captured by a chieftain during a raid by the Southern Hsiung-nu, the enemy of the Han ethnic people. She had to stay with barbarians for twelve years and had two children with her Hsiung-nu husband. As it is described in *The Woman Warrior*, her life with Hsiung-nu people was very distressing (Kingston 1981: 185–186):

> The barbarians were primitives. They gathered inedible reeds when they camped along rivers and dried them in the sun. They dried the reeds tied on their flagpoles and horses' manes and tails. Then they cut wedges and holes. They slipped feathers and arrow shafts into the shorter reeds, which became nock-whistles.

> During battle the arrows whistled, high whirling whistles that suddenly stopped when the arrows hit true. Even when the barbarians missed, they terrified their enemies by filling the air with death sounds, which Ts'ai Yen had thought was their only music, until one night she heard music tremble and rise like desert wind. She walked out of her tent and saw hundreds of the barbarians sitting upon the sand, the sand gold under the moon. Their elbows were raised, and they were blowing on flutes. They reached again and again for a high note, yearning towards a high not, which they found at last and held- an icicle in the desert. The music disturbed Ts'ai Yen; its sharpness and its cold made her ache. It disturbed her so that she could not concentrate on her own thoughts. Night after night the songs filled the desert no matter how many duns away she walked. She hid in her tent but could not sleep through the sound. Then, out of Ts'ai Yen's tent, which was apart from the others, the barbarians heard a woman's voice singing, as if to her babies, a song so high and clear, it matched the flutes. Ts'ai Yen sang about China and her family there. Her words seemed to be Chinese, but the barbarians understood their sadness and anger. Sometimes they thought could catch barbarian phrases about forever wandering. Her children did not laugh, but eventually sang along when she left her tent to sit by the winter campfires, ringed by barbarians. After twelve years among the Southern Hsiung-nu, Ts'ai Yen was ransomed and married to Tung Ssu so that her father would have Han descendants. She brought her songs back from the savage lands, and one of the three that has been passed down to us is 'Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe', a song that Chinese sing to their own instruments. It translated well.

From the above narration, it is clear that Ts'ai Yen is Chinese, of Han ethnicity. However, the barbarian culture permeates her life in Hsiung-nu. In this circumstance, it is very hard for her to be assimilated into the Hsiung-nu society because she cannot speak the barbarian language and understand their culture. As illustrated above, the barbarian culture is like their music, which is "sharp" and makes Ts'ai Yen feel uncomfortable. The powerful barbarian culture has great impact on Ts'ai Yen even though at first she cannot accept their music. The flute music can be perceived as the element of barbarian cultural identity or "colonial authority" identity which functions as the medium transferring the barbarian culture to Ts'ai Yen. Gradually, however, Ts'ai Yen, who sings in a high voice to match it, learns the flute music. Her voice conveys Ts'ai Yen's sadness and anger because she is as if like imprisoned in the powerful barbarian culture. As a matter of fact, the voice singing has the character of Han ethnic music, which is to display Ts'ai Yen's own ethnic identity. Subsequently, Ts'ai Yen brings back the famous song "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" to the Han people. From a postcolonial stance, the song "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is actually the hybrid of Han ethnic culture and barbarian culture. The song's

original version is Hsiung-nu flute music as its title suggests. On the other hand, "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is translated into Chinese and also played with Chinese instruments rather than the original barbarian instrument. This adaptation displaces the barbarian or Hsiung-nu culture as the authority. Moreover, employing the Chinese instrument and language to play and perform the flute music constructs the disjunctive repetition of the "original" flute music, but there is distinction between "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" and the original flute version. "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is a hybrid. Moreover, as a hybrid, the qualities of mimicry and ambivalence are visible. The matched woman's voice is sung in Chinese but the barbarians can understood it, which implies that the adapted piece of music will inherit the original identity because it can be understood by barbarians, but still ambivalent because it is sung in Chinese.

Through the lens of Ts'ai Yen and "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe", the narrator finds a way to speak out with her own voices as the descendant of the Chinese immigrants. To narrate her unspeakably painful experience under white cultural supremacy, she tells her own story at the same time as Ts'ai Yen sings her own voices. Basically, American culture has influenced the narrator deeply, which provides the original element of American identity. For instance, the narrator insists on going to college for studying, which represents American individuality. In stressing the representation of American individuality, Shu Yuan (1999: 203) remarks:

> When stressing the fact that "I" is a capital and "you" a lower-case in English, Kingston highlights the different linguistic formation and cultural signification of "I" in Chinese and speculates that the awkward construction of the Chinese character loses its function in designating any individuality.

Moreover, the narrator's resistance at meeting those FOB arranged by her mothers and fellow villagers explicitly demonstrates that she does not succumb to Chinese patriarchal values and convention; rather, she wants to be an independent women in making decisions both in her career and marriage. From this point of view, she attempts to employ the discourse of individualism fighting against Chinese patriarchal tradition to articulate her American identity (Shu 1999: 203). However, as the descendant of Chinese immigrants, the Chinese identification marked on the narrator makes her

"unseen" or neglected by the dominant culture. Psychologically, in metonymic displacement, "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is a mediated reference to the narrator's growing up in America. In reference to the Ts'ai Yen and her piece of music, the narrator reconstructs her self-image, which makes her capable of breaking the "silence" and claiming her hyphenated identity as Chinese-American.

So far, this study has examined the formation of the narrator's hyphenated identity from two perspectives, the post-colonialist and the feminist. The narrator in *The Woman Warrior* recasts the female subjectivity in order to articulate her American identities as "masculine", individual. However, the female subjectivity still embodies the patriarchal content, filial piety. Therefore, from whichever aspect one inspects the identity construction of the narrator, those displayed identities such as individual, "masculine" and filial are "split" and "ambivalent", compared to the "original" Chinese and American identities. Rather, the identities represented by Hua Mu Lan are for the narrator, actually the camouflage of repeating the "partial" essence of the Chinese and American identities. Moreover, the discussion of Ts'ai Yen presented by the fiction in detail from the postcolonial point of view substantiates the hyphenated identity further. Apparently, Ts'ai Yen's story reminds the narrator that she is capable of confirming her national identity as Chinese-American.

4.2 Construction of Chinese and American National Identities

The Woman Warrior as a multi-faceted literary work represents prolific Chinese and American culture and national characters. Through the narration of the 'I' narrator, the portrayal of these identities will be analyzed in detail. According to Joep Leerssen (2007: 380), the national categories are sketched as the projections, images, and characterological rationalizations of the world's diversity, which has the implication that the studies of national identities should objectively examine the represented national images rather than juxtapose them with stereotypes. Hence the studies of Chinese and American national identities in this chapter are the imagological analysis with respect to its cultural construction and literary representation in fixed period mentioned in the introduction. Firstly, the concentration will put on the listed Chinese

identities which include holding the concept of harmony, love of nature, collectiveness, filial piety and indirectness. Secondly, it will examine the American identities related to the notion of the American Dream represented in *The Woman Warrior*.

4.2.1 Chinese Harmony Concept and Love of Nature

As mentioned previously that the narrator learns martial art. Her basic martial art training begins with the intimating animals. The 'I' narrator learns the slow steps of square, the flying of owls and bats, the rapid and agile jump of bats and monkey, which help the 'I' narrator grasp the primary skills of martial art and enable her to become a tough warrior (Kingston 1981: 29). The representation of animal routines in *The Woman Warrior* is in accordance with the discussion of the Chinese concept of harmony. The image of typical Chinese martial artist portrayed in this fiction is also represented in many action movies. However, to certain extent these movie plots represent the rigidified image of Chinese martial artists who are always like to show off their fancy skills. As a matter of fact, the "essence" of the Chinese martial art seeks the promotion of self-cultivation morally and mentally in context of Chinese culture. The embodiment of this kind of cultivation is to learn from nature. From an imagological perspective, the portrayal of martial arts by Kingston is to indicate her understanding of the "essence" of Chinese martial art, which is constructed as a textual strategy to interrogate the gap between the "real" Chinese martial art and the representation, such as in classic Hong Kong action movie. This is also the implication of Kingston's uncertainty about what the "original" Chinese culture is due to her "dislocated" and "in-between" position.

Moreover, the loving of nature is also represented through the portrayal of natural hills and streams. The narrator in "White Tigers", sketches a landscape picture when she is taken away by a crane, which is depicted as below (Kingston 1981: 26):

> The call would come from a bird that flew over our roof. In the brush drawings it looks like the ideograph for 'human', two black wings. The bird would across the sun and lift into the mountains (which look like the ideograph 'mountain'), there parting the mist briefly that swirled opaque again. I would be a little girl of seven the day I followed the bird away into the mountains. The brambles would keep climbing, eyes upward to follow the bird. We would go around and around the tallest mountain, Climbing ever upward. I would drink from the river, which I would meet again and again. We would go so high the plants would change, and

> the river that flows past the village would become a waterfall. At the height where the bird used to disappear, the clouds would grey the world like an ink wash. Even when I got used to that grey, I would not know how many hours or days passed. Suddenly, without noise, I would break clear into a yellow, warm world. New trees would lean towards me at mountain angles, but when I looked for the village, it would have vanished under the clouds. The bird, now gold so close to the sun, would come to rest on the thatch of a hut, which, until the bird's two feet touched it, was camouflaged as part of the mountainside.

The above illustration represents a typical Chinese landscape painting substantiating that it is popular theme adopted by Chinese artists. The abstract and poetic painting style has been expressed through the above illustration. Employing a different method to draw the landscape indicating the big difference between the Chinese painting and the Western painting, which requires the exact and authentic representation of the substances or the materials; the Chinese paintings, rather, always give the abstract representations due to its unique techniques, which make use of brush to draw with ink. Thus, traditional Chinese paintings also have another name called "brush-painting", which is its vernacular appellation. As described in the excerpt, for instance, "the clouds would grey the world like ink wash" is actually painted in its literary meaning.

Illustration 1 The House in Remote Mountain and Landscape by Dai Yufei (2009)

As illustration 1 shows, the brush represents the mountains, streams, and waterfalls in an abstract way. However, the application of poetic painting as the representation of the narrator's journey to the residence of the old couple constructs one disposition of the narrator, who is deeply influenced by the Chinese affection for nature and has internalized this aesthesis, so that she portrays her journey as a landscape painting. Through the imagination, she is taken away by the bird crossing over the rivers and climbing up the mountains to arrive at the old couples' place—a hut, located at the mountainside. In this sense, she demonstrates this aesthesis as Lin (2002: 281) presents: "a man who is at peace with nature, who is free from the shackles of society and from the temptations of gold, and whose spirit is deeply immersed in mountains and rivers and other manifestations of nature." The 'I' narrator as the candidate to be a martial artist actually practices this aesthesis. Moreover, the old couples, masters of Chinese Kong Fu are hidden in the remote mountains substantiating this consciousness of harmony and love of nature. Through the portrayal of learning from animal and picturing landscape, the ideology that Chinese have deep affection for nature is constructed in *The Woman Warrior*.

The learning from nature and love of it demonstrate Chinese Taoist consciousness towards nature and human beings. The stress of this ideology is unfolded mainly through the idea of harmony. In *The Woman Warrior*, the harmony-centered theme is primarily constructed through the depiction of the Chinese totem, the "dragon". The Chinese "dragon" is an invented animal in mythology and folklore, which is depicted as long, scaled, serpentine body with four legs. The Chinese "dragon" is also perceived as the symbol which has the auspicious power. Previously, the emperor was symbolized as the son of "heaven" or "dragon", whose dress was called the "dragon dress". Moreover, the Chinese people claim they are the "descendants of the dragon". It seems that the "dragon" as symbol and totem has been closely related to the Chinese people. This relationship can be investigated on the basis of the 'I' narrator's learning of dragon way in "White Tigers".

After seven years training, it is time for the 'I' narrator to learn the way of dragon. However, the 'I' narrator raises her doubt about what the dragon way is, because she states "Tigers are easy to find, but I needed adult wisdom to know dragons" (Kingston

1981: 33). This description shows that the narrator has no idea what "dragon" is, not to mention the dragon way. As mentioned above, the Chinese "dragon" is a legendary creature. Therefore, there is no actual substance of "dragon" for the narrator to imitate. Under this circumstance, the "dragon" as a symbol is actually cultural construction represented in this excerpt. However, the "dragon" constructed in *The Woman Warrior* refers to "nature". The narrator tries to find the traces of dragon, reminded by the old couple. As a consequence, she observes that the "dragon" actually exists in nature; correspondingly, its head, veins and muscles, teeth and bones, flesh, and hairs are mountains, quarries, minerals, soil, plant and trees, which constitute nature (Kingston 1981: 33). Moreover, "dragon" is also the "God" of rain and the "Goddess" of the thunderstorm in Chinese myth whose tongue functions as the lightning and raining. For example, "In the spring when the dragon awakes, I watched its turnings in the rivers" suffices above assertion (Kingston 1981: 33). In short, "dragon" in *The Woman Warrior* is represented as nature. However, the "dragon" also represents the Chinese nation.

There is a short depiction that drinking the sap of the pine will make people immortal (Kingston 1981: 33–34). The pine tree is perceived as an immortal tree for its longevity, which also becomes the symbol of longevity in Chinese culture. Because dragon is embodied by nature as a whole, as mentioned in above analysis, understandably the every creature on earth is part of it. Then, it is justified that the pine tree is the incarnation of the dragon (Kingston 1981: 33). Therefore, the pine tree symbolizes immortality as well as nature which is everlasting. Then, drinking the sap of the pine tree is perceived as drinking the blood of the "dragon". Therefore, the portrayal of the mortal who drinks the sap of the pine tree is perceived as having "kinship" with dragon, correspondingly with regard to the claim that the Chinese are the "descendants of dragon". Therefore, the description of the "dragon" in *The Woman Warrior* actually reveals the relationship between human beings and nature represented by the "dragon", which is interwoven and connected. From this point of view, the symbolic application of "dragon" as nature in association with the Chinese people as "kin" of dragon constructs the harmony.

So far, the images of the Chinese people in terms of holding the concept of harmony and loving nature are analyzed in respect to the above three aspects. Firstly, learning

from animals explains that the Chinese depicted in the selected excerpt are modestly observing and learning from nature. Secondly, traditional Chinese poetic landscape painting is also constructed, which implies once again the characteristic of the Chinese people who love nature. Thirdly, the application of "dragon" which is embodied by nature reifies the "dragon" as nature, united with the "dragon" as the Chinese people, which justifies the Taoist ideology that human races should live harmoniously with nature. Therefore, the image of Chinese as loving of nature and holding the concept of harmony is constructed in *The Woman Warrior*. In imagological sense, Kingston's portrayals of these Chinese images display her deep assimilation of Chinese Taoist ideology, which is a strategy to confirm her "Chineseness" as the descendant of Chinese "dragon". Moreover, the representation of this stereotype by Kingston is to demonstrate her "authority" because the "dragon" is the symbol of power. The imposition of "authority" on the 'I' narrator and the Chinese immigrants in *The Woman Warrior* shows that they are empowered to speak with their own voices and ask for equal rights even though they are in subordinated positions in America. The portrayals of the close connectivity between the Chinese people and the "dragon" and the concept of harmony actually construct a textual discourse arguing the unequal circumstances between the dominant white people and the ethnic Chinese and appealing against the discrimination, which is by no means good for building a "harmonious" America.

4.2.2 Chinese Collective Activity

"Chineseness" as collective has been discussed in Chapter 3, which is generated and undergirded by the family-village system. This particular Chinese identity as literary construction in *The Woman Warrior* is basically through the depiction of the collective behavior of "villagers" both in China and in America. Firstly, the 'I' narrator portrays the villager's punishment of the no-name aunt, which is conspicuous evidence to prove the Chinese collectiveness. Depicting the underlying village system, Kingston writes (1981: 4) "all the village were kinsman, and the titles shouted in loud country voices never let kinship be forgotten", which underlies the cohesive power of village collectiveness. Furthermore, there is another example to show this village collectiveness. The villagers are deeply moved by the narrator's filial piety and send their boys to her for fighting. It is described as: "families who had hidden their boys

during the last conscription volunteered them now" (Kingston 1981: 39–40). It not only demonstrates the villagers' collective action for supporting the 'I' narrator, but also explains that the village system has strengthen the practice of ethical regulations such as filial piety which is deeply ingrained in Chinese's minds.

Secondly, the mechanism of the family-village system still functions in America. The cohesive Chinese immigrants' community is described as a "village" by Kingston (1981: 165). As to its impacts, the portrayal of the patriarch of the Chinese community explains the village system as an "unseen" governing mechanism for Chinese immigrants' daily affairs. There is one wealthy family, which is perceived as the patriarch of the Chinese immigrants because "we immigrants and descendants of immigrants were obliged to her family for ever for bringing us here and for finding us jobs" (Kingston 1981: 172). Furthermore, the Chinese immigrants in Chinatown altogether keep the secret of the illegal immigrants from China (Kingston 1981: 164–165):

> Are there really flags in Chinatown signaling what stowaways have arrived in San Francisco Bay, their names, and which ships they came on? 'Mother, I heard some kids say there are flags like that. Are there? What colours 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 associations?' 'I don't know. Maybe the San Francisco villagers do that; our villagers don't do that.

It is obviously that these Chinese immigrants still hold the concept of Tong Xian, because they help these new Chinese immigrants and conceal their information as Brave Orchid does. This concept strengthens the collectiveness of the Chinese immigrants. As Kingston suggests that, everything in Chinese culture seems round, the round doorway, the round windows, the round moon cake and round tables, etc. This metaphorical use of the "roundness" is to indicate that the Chinese social relationship is a circle, in which everyone is tightly connected. Therefore, through the demonstration of Chinese collective activities both in China an in America, the national identity of Chinese as collective is represented in *The Woman Warrior*. From the perspective of imagoloy, the depiction of Chinese collectiveness in Old China by the author functions to interrogate the patriarchal hierarchy as a social mechanism restraining women's subjectivity.

Moreover, the collectiveness of Chinese immigrants in America actually engenders a cohesive power, challenging the dominant white authority. The literary representation of this identity aims at showing that the Chinese immigrants as minorities attempt to gain better political and social benefits. The power relationship between the authorities and ethnic minorities in the United States is revealed, which suffices that the sketch of stereotypes is rather a textual discourse.

4.2.3 Chinese Filial Behavior

In stressing the representation of Chinese identity, the important virtue of filial piety is highly praised by the Chinese, embodied by the 'I' narrator, who has internalized this quality. Filial piety is practiced in China as the most influential cultural norm as discussed previously. The narrator as the descendant of the Chinese has shown her filial piety as substituting for her old father going into the army as Hua Mu Lan does. This is perceived as sharing the parents' annoyance and solving it in conformity with the six principles mentioned before. Furthermore, filial piety also can be fulfilled by gaining the fame and wealth for the family. It is conventionally accepted that the Chinese parents hope their children to become the "dragon" which underlines their good wish for their success of their children. Gradually, to realize this wish is undertaken as practicing filial piety. Therefore, the portrayal of the 'I' narrator coming back to her hometown with good fame and wealth is another example to represent this characteristic of the Chinese, as Kingston says (1981: 47): "from the words on my back and how they were fulfilled, the villagers would make a legend about my perfect filiality." Moreover, the deliberately employing of the filiality in *The Woman Warrior* is to argue narrator's complex feeling towards a patriarchal cultural norm. Consequently, the depiction of filiality in *The Woman Warrior* is rather a strategic construction of Kingston's hyphenated identity.

4.2.4 Chinese Indirectness

Generally speaking, the Oriental way of communication is like around the circle, which is the opposite of the Occidental style. The portrayal of this feature in *The Woman Warrior* reveals Chinese indirectness. Encountering Moon Orchid's way of talking enables the 'I' narrator to experience the variations between Chinese and American

culture. Moon Orchid attempts to communicate with her nieces in Chinese style (Kingston 1981: 122–123):

> She hovered over a child who was reading, and she pointed at certain words. 'What's that?' she tapped at a section that somebody had underlined or annotated. If the child was being patient, he said, 'That's an important part.' 'Why is it important?' 'Because it tells the main idea here.' 'What's the main idea?' 'I don't know the Chinese words for it.' 'They're so clever,' Moon Orchid would exclaim.' They're so smart. Isn't it wonderful they know things that can't be said in Chinese?' 'Thank you,' the child said. When she complimented them, they agreed with her! Not once did she hear a child deny a compliment. 'You're pretty,' she said. 'Thank you, Aunt,' they answered. How vain. She marveled at their vanity. 'You play the radio beautifully,' she teased, and sure enough, they gave one another puzzled looks. She tried all kinds of compliments, and they never said,' oh, no, you're too kind. I can't play it at all. I'm stupid. I'm ugly.' They were capable children; they could do servants' work. But they were not modest.

The conversation between Moon Orchid and Brave Orchid's Children constructs a collision between Chinese and American culture. As to the Chinese, it is very polite to say indirectly showing their modesty. However, when indirectness encounters the directness, the dramatic effect is produced as above illustration. In this situation, Moon Orchid, a traditional Chinese feels that Brave Orchid's child has no modest because they directly accept her compliments. The children are supposed to act as modest when they are praised by the elders even though they really deserve the compliments in the context of Chinese culture. The ideal response to answer a compliment is as such "Oh, no, you're too kind. I can't play it at all. I'm stupid. I'm ugly." Through this example, the Chinese are inclined to say indirectly or the opposite is demonstrated. The above excerpt is just a glimpse of the indirectness of the Chinese; there is another example as Kingston portrays (1981: 181):

> You turned out so unusual. I fixed your tongue so you could say charming things. You don't 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 is ugly; she can still do schoolwork.' '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 the opposite.'

The conversation demonstrates that Brave Orchid wants to educate her daughter in the Chinese cultural lessons that the children should say hello first to the elders in order to

show their politeness and good family education. However, the narrator feels uncomfortable and cannot accept this way. Moreover, obviously, Brave Orchid attempts to console the narrator, who is perceived as not so beautiful by her and the villagers in Chinatown. However, Brave Orchid elucidates one thing explicitly that the Chinese people like to say the opposite. This communication style constructs the Chinese indirectness in *The Woman Warrior*. Furthermore, the portrayal of this trait of Chinese is to exemplify how different it is between Chinese culture and American culture, which is the genesis of the cultural collision faced by the narrator. Thus, it is justified to assert that Kingston strategically makes use of this particular Chinese communicate style to show her cultural mediation. Moreover, the portrayals of Chinese indirectness dispose of the hegemonic American communicate style. The Chinese identities discussed above, such as holding the concept of harmony, loving nature, collective and filial cannot be simply described as the "essence" or "nature" of the Chinese people. Rather, the cultural construction of these traits in *The Woman Warrior* is actually a textual discourse.

4.2.5 Immigrants' American Dream

The stories displayed in *The Woman Warrior* are concerned with the life of the Chinese women both in China and in America. Evidently, these Chinese protagonists such as the no-name aunt, Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid present many Chinese cultural norms and customs. The "Chineseness" is pervasive in this fiction. However, "Americanness" is also presented under the veil. Rather than the conspicuous representation of the Chinese images, the cultural construction of "Americanness" in *The Woman Warrior* needs in-depth investigation. Presumably, "Americanness" in *The Woman Warrior* is through the portrayal of the Chinese immigrant's striving in America and their "Americanized" attitudes, which interpret the meaning of the "American Dream" analyzed in the theoretical part.

Firstly, American rugged individualism in terms of self-reliance and freedom of choice will be examined. "Self-image" can be portrayed through the lens of the other's image. Compared to Chinese' collectiveness, then, the American people are much more self-reliant and free to make choice. Kingston (1981: 14) points out that "Women in the Old China did not choose. Some man had commanded her to lie with him and be his secret

evils." This description implies that Chinese women are not free, under patriarchal authority. Compared to the Chinese women's unfortunate situation, women in America are much more independent and have freedom.

However, for making the issue of the "self-reliance" much more conspicuous as the identity and the essence of the "American Dream", the life depiction of Moon Orchid in China as totally dependent on her husband and her incapable of surviving in America constitute a comparison of Chinese women's "dependence" and American women's individualism. When she immigrates to America successfully, she is confronted with many problems. One of them is to maintain herself because her husband does not accept her. However, thirty years' leisurely life has made her a "lazy" person, who cannot bear any laborious working. For example, Brave Orchid lets her work in the laundry; however, she spends half an hour to tug the shirt. On the contrary, diligent Brave Orchid and her families work very hard to settle down permanently in this country. Much more significantly, Brave Orchid and her husband do not only have six children to raise but also send money back to China to support their brothers and sisters. At least, in America, this Dream land, the "self-reliance" is the basic motto for the immigrants. It is obvious that the workload of Brave Orchid and her family is very heavy. However, according to Shu Yuan's analysis of the Chinese immigrant women, working conditions presented in *The Woman Warrior* exposes the unequal circumstances for many minorities in America. She raises several questions: Why were Chinese American businesses separated from the mainstream economy? Why didn't working class immigrant women like Brave Orchid get any adequate training for the work force (2001: 212)? Here, it is clear that the ethical problem and immigrants' economic condition are represented in *The Woman Warrior*. Moreover, it can be fairly to assert that Brave Orchid has made a choice to come to America for joining with her husband, and she has to accept the harsh survival situation. Long time hard-working and endurance are the origins of the physical and mental agony. This agony caused by self-reliance and freedom to choose is the passive effect of the "rugged individualism". Undoubtedly, as Shu Yuan (2001: 211) argues, Brave Orchid is "a new woman warrior who tries to succeed by becoming independent and by eliminating signs of weakness that are conventionally associated with women, or rather, the Chinese women". It is

justified to say that Brave Orchid, as another protagonist in *The Woman Warrior*, has internalized this American value and belief.

Moreover, the long residence in America has made these Chinese immigrants accustomed to their new life in this country even though there are still many cultural and obstacles they need to overcome. As Brave Orchid confesses that she has got used to American food, it reveals that the Chinese immigrants has integrated to some extent to America. Furthermore, the description in *The Woman Warrior* implies that America is a country where private enterprises are protected by law; however, the situation depicted in China in 1960s to 1970s is not so optimistic. As to Brave Orchid, she is not so much as her relative in China, who received the political persecution due to Cultural Revolution. In this sense, Brave Orchid's endurance and striving present American rugged individualism.

Secondly, Moon Orchid's husband represents the American Dream in terms of upward mobility portrayed in *The Woman Warrior*. Generally speaking, the America Dream signifies that America is a land where dreams come true, conventionally, which designates the commercial success. Moon Orchid's husband is undoubtedly a successful immigrant example to justify this merit. Moon Orchid's husband has a great amount of money because he can do some job the "barbarians" (the Americans) value greatly. He is integrated into the society very well because he has got married to an American girl and has three children. More than this, he opens a clinic as a brain surgeon. The specific description of Brave Orchid's visiting his office reveals his commercial success as such (Kingston 198: 133–134):

> The building was a fine one, the lobby was chrome and glass, with ashtray stands and plastic couches arranged in semicircles. She waited for the elevator to fill before she got in, not wanting to operate a new machine by herself. Once on the sixth floor she searched alertly for the number in her address book. How clean his building was. The rest rooms were locked, and there were square overhead lights. No windows, though. She did not like the quiet corridors with carpets but no windows. They felt like tunnels. He must be very wealthy. [..] She sat before an elegant telephone and an electric typewriter. The wallpaper in her cubicle was like aluminium foil, a metallic background for a tall black frame around white paint with dashes of red. The wall of the waiting room was covered with burlap, and there were plants in wooden tubs. It was an expensive waiting room. Brave Orchid approved. The patients looked well dressed, not sickly and poor.

The appropriate decoration of the office and the decent patients demonstrates the financial conditions of Moon Orchid's husband. It is unfolded that a brain surgeon is a good occupation in America, while Brave Orchid cannot become a surgeon in America in that she cannot speak English and her medical education in China cannot satisfy the requirement of this occupation in America. Brave Orchid's failure of undertaking the medical profession serves as the antithesis of Moon Orchid's husband's success. Moreover, contrastively, plenty of Chinese immigrants do the relatively inferior and laborious jobs such as maid in the hotel, working at canneries where there is low English demanded at first, as Brave Orchid states: "A lot of immigrants start that way nowadays. And the maids get to bring home all the leftovers and the clothes people leave behind." (Kingston 1981: 116) A Much more sever situation for immigrants is working in Chinatown with payment of just twenty-five cents an hour (Kingston 1981: 116). Even for Brave Orchid, who was previously a famous doctor in her village, cannot dedicate herself to the medical profession in America. Undoubtedly, Moon Orchid's husband has a good family and obtains wealth in America, actually making his "American dream" come true. The merit of dreaming of upward mobility as enjoying one's fruits of their labor (economically) is constructed.

Then, to give a closer observation of the essence of dreaming of upward mobility in terms of gaining ultimate self-realization, there is evidence for justify this meaning in *The Woman Warrior*. One of the 'I' narrator's dream is to become a newspaper reporter. As to the 'I' narrator, she considers that women should be equal with men. Therefore, the tragic life of the no-name aunt deeply touches her heart. As an independent intellectual women, the 'I' narrator is assumed to be responsible for claiming the rights of women and changing the unequal treatment between women and men whether they are in the Third World or the First World (Wang & lv 2005: 23). The narrator successfully dedicates herself to report the execrable situation of the Chinese women as she writes in *The Woman Warrior*: "My aunt haunts me- her ghost drawn to me because now, after fifty years of neglect, I alone devote papers of paper to her, though not origamied into houses and clothes" (Kingston 1981: 22). It is clear that the narrator endeavors to accuse her aunt of being unequal and inhuman treated, with writing down her story. Moreover, she is fascinated by the story of Hua Mu Lan and looking forward

to becoming the swordswomen. Eventually, she becomes the storyteller who uses the pen as her incisive sword to fight against the unfair circumstances between men and women, the authorities and the subordinates. She employs the writing to narrate the great hardship for the Chinese immigrant's in America and the unspeakable dilemma of these Chinese-Americans. Through writing down the fiction of *The Woman Warrior*, the 'I' narrator accomplishes her wish as a reporter, while it is slightly different from the original wish. From this point of view, the narrator has already obtained the achievement of self-realization through her insistence of mastering her own destiny rather than follow Brave Orchid's will to be the typist. The essence of dreaming upward mobility in terms of the virtue of achieving the self-realization is sublimed and displayed by the narrator's success of speaking for the oppressed minorities and women under the authority of white cultural supremacy in United States.

To conclude, the various connotations of the American identities or "Americanness" in terms of the "American Dream" signify different meanings transferred by different American temporalities. The context presented in *The Woman Warrior* is in the circumstance when the first Chinese immigrants and their descendants are striving for their life in America. America is a "dream" land, where Chinese immigrants are the same as other ethnic groups in every effort to put their "dreams" into practice and ultimately realize them. In making through these "dreams", newcomers internalize and present the essence of "Americanness", rugged individualism and upward mobility.

5 CONCLUSIONS

To have an overview of the whole thesis, there are two aims of the thesis. One was to investigate the dilemma confronted by the 'I' narrator, who is struggling in the collision of the Chinese and American cultures and finally constructs her hyphenated identity, and the other was to examine the Chinese and American national identities represented in *The Woman Warrior*. Subsequently, it proceeded to the theoretical analysis of the notion of the hyphenated identity based on Bahbha's exposition of hybridity and the elucidation of the phenomenon of American hyphenation. Furthermore, the theoretical discussion of Chinese and American identities was on the basis of the observations of prominent intellectuals such as Lin Yutang and Arthur Smith, whose writings provided critical research on Chinese national identities. The analysis of the American Dream in terms of rugged individualism and upward mobility constructed "Americanness". The fourth part of this thesis dealt with thorough research on the protagonist of the 'I' narrator's constructing of her hyphenated identity in *The Woman Warrior*, employing the postcolonialist approach in association with feminist viewpoints and the imagological studies of the two national identities represented in it. These are the results of the analysis.

Firstly, the hypothesis suggested in this thesis was that the identity formation of the 'I' narrator in *The Woman Warrior* is hyphenated as Chinese-American. With the incorporation of feminist criticism with postcolonial, the in-depth analysis of the protagonist of the 'I' narrator in this fiction demonstrated that the narrator actually has reconciled herself to the in-between situation and finds her national and cultural belonging to the "Third Space", hybridity as Chinese-American. The consequence is that the narrator is already in opposition as double-marginalized. On the one hand, as a female, she is discriminated against and despised by Chinese culture. On the other hand, as a Chinese descendant, she also experiences the discrimination of white culture. In this double "unspeakable" and subordinate circumstance, only through establishing her own unique identity which is capable of claiming her own voices and rights, can the narrator get rid of the "ghost-like" situation. The construction of a hyphenated identity is undoubtedly the successful approach to assert her particular national or cultural affiliation. This construct has been achieved by keeping the "Chineseness" and

"Americanness" without betraying and offending either side. However, from the postcolonial standpoint, this hyphenated identity displays an "otherness", the quality of "ambivalence". Just because of this "ambivalence", the "third space" provides the place where the 'I' narrator can release her suffering of double discrimination.

Moreover, the hyphenated identity has its own advantage in articulating the identities of minorities in a subordinate position. As mentioned above, hybridity involves metonymic displacement of the "original" authoritative cultural identity; however, it by no means can be identified with the original cultures. Thus, the application of metonymy displacement articulating the repetition of the original cultural authority undergirds the acknowledgement of the culture in domination. That is to say, the 'I' narrator as the person possessing the hyphenated identity should be legitimately acknowledged and accepted by both the Americans and Chinese minorities because the articulation of hyphenated identity is actually articulation of the "partial" essence of "original" Chinese and American cultures. Furthermore, the "partial" inheritance of the "original" cultural identities is not simply repetition. The uniqueness of hyphenated identity is as a weapon fighting against the homogeneity of both dominant white culture supremacy and Chinese patriarchal culture. Under the circumstances of double discrimination by these two cultures, there is no space for the 'I' narrator to articulate her relatively "unorthodox" perspectives. Therefore, the construction of hybridity, which confirms her identities, is the action of challenging the authority of these two cultures. The 'I' narrator breaks out of the "unspeakable" dilemma, setting an example for the immigrants minorities who are vacillating between the cultures.

Furthermore, the representation of American individualism in *The Woman Warrior* expresses the 'I' narrator's inclination towards cultural assimilation, wanting to get out of the discriminatory situation. On the other hand, the portrayal of the similarity between the swordswoman, Hua Mu Lan and the 'I' narrator actually justifies that the adaptation of the traditional balladry does not betray the Chinese culture, but is a discursive strategy to articulate her American identities without giving up the traditional values such as filial piety. As Bahbha (1997: 171) comments, ideological discourse of modernity "tries to construct hegemonic 'normality' from uneven development and the differential, often inferior nations and communities". The articulation of hybridity or

hyphenated identity as the Chinese-American offers resolution for the ‘I’ narrator, who no longer hesitates in making a decision as to which side she belongs. The “mental” diaspora of the ‘I’ narrator eventually finds the belonging, cultural and ethnical affection in both two cultures, Chinese and American.

Secondly, it is proposed that the Chinese and American national identities as literary representation in *The Woman Warrior* are inclined to rigidify the two nation’s images on the basis of the ‘I’ narrator’s narration. However, based on the theoretical discussion of these two nations’ characteristics, conventions, values and attitudes, the portrayals of these two nation’s identities investigated in detail confirm that these two national identities correspond to the historical temporalities of China and America. In imagological sense, national cultures and identities are not fixed as these stereotypes, which are cultural constructions like images on a projection screen. For instance, the European’s perception of the Chinese image has varied from time to time, which are perceived as the high civilized evolving into the cunning, devious, hypocritical, stagnant and despotic in the nineteenth century (Schweiger 2007: 126–131), which explains that the images are mobile and changeable, both in value and in substance (Leerssen 2007: 343). Moreover, imagology supports the idea that “discourse implicitly raises a claim of referentiality vis-à-vis empirical reality, […] yet the actual validity of that referentiality claim is not the imagologist’s to verify or falsify.” (Leerssen 2007: 27) In this sense, the imagological Chinese and American national identities researched in this thesis only refere to its presentation and appearances. That is to say, the validity of the portraits in *The Woman Warrior* as reflecting reality cannot be measured. Moreover, according to Leerssen (2007: 23): “images concerning character and identity are not mental representations which are conceived by nations about nations but which, as articulated discursive constructs circulating through societies, are constitutive of national identification patterns.” Therefore, the concept of the Chinese national identity as harmonious, collective, nature loving, filial, and indirect and American national identity as rugged individualism and dreaming of upward mobility are actually literary articulations, which provide referential national identification patterns. For the images concerning a nation are changeable in association with the postcolonial consideration that culture is “enuciative”, it is justified that national sharing culture in terms of the

national identity are “enuciative”, “reinscribing and relocating the political claim to national image’s priority and hierarchy” (Bhabha 1997: 177). To what extent the literary representations of the national identities are valid, the justified conclusion is that these Chinese and American national images portrayed in *The Woman Warrior* are cultural constructions as a textual discourse. Even though inclined to stereotype, the two national identities are helpful as a reference to critical studies of the national images as representation in imagology.

To conclude, literary representation of the ‘I’ narrator’s hybridity explains that literatures provide the forum where oppressed, “unspeakable” subaltern cultures, minorities, nations and individuals are capable of articulating their identities and attempting to break out of the uneven power relationship between the “homogeneous normality” which is constructed by the ideological discourses of the dominant and the “unspeakable” groups and individuals. Moreover, imagological studies have proved that literary discourses have the function of representing national identities. Because the cultures are plural, the imagological studies of *The Woman Warrior*’s Chinese and American national identities signify cultural differences and national image variations.

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