

# [Amy the nationalists during 1937 -1949 . globalisation](https://assignbuster.com/amy-the-nationalists-during-1937-1949-globalisation/)

Amy Tan, Asian – American writer brings outthe experience of women , feeling of isolation and mother –daughterrelationship . Her works focuses on stifling shift of three generationalexistences in their homeland China and their new abode America . It notonly  means and individual’s shiftingfrom one place to another but a group moving in search of new destinies . Theirshifting condition oscillates between twin identities , twin culture  , twin minds-set from their roots and routesthey have taken. Their oscillation results from pain and sufferings with theirstrong emotional bonding of their cultures , traditions and values. The disruptingtraumatic condition , that one experiences while leaving the country of origininvoluntarily changes, their attitude and thinking  not only of the past but also the present andthe future as well.  The HundredSecret Sense Tan lucidly highlights the immigrants of  Chinese diaspora to America after thetortured memory of the Sino – Japan war and the civil war between thecommunists and the nationalists during 1937 -1949 . Globalisation marks theculture and retains the connection between the homeland and the new land .

Hyphenated Experience in Amy Tan ‘ sTHE HUNDRED SECRET SENSESAsian Americans  are Americans of Asian descent . The UScensus Bureau definitionof Asians as “ Asian ”  refers to a personhaving origins in any of the Indian sub continent . The term Asian American wasused informally by activists in the 1960 s with sought of an alternative to theterm Oriental , arguing that the latter was derogatory and colonialist . Formalusage was introduced by academics in the early 1970 s notably by historian YujiIchioka , who is credited with popularising the term .

Today , Asian Americanis the accepted term for most formal purposes, such as government and academicresearch , although it is often shortened to Asian in common usage. The challenges around defining AsianAmerican Literature are not unique and it indicate the issues of race, cultureand national identity that are endemic to United States history and culture. The world’s best Chinese American author Amy Tan’s fiction reads the stiflingshift of three generational economic existence of the Chinese in their homelandChina and their new abode America. Most of the writers are of the view thatone’s homeland is a paradise to one. The new land would never become a paradiseto a displaced person . Amy Tan points out that a person should learn to liveamidst new situations to accommodate themselves in the country  of adaption . She highlights thenecessity  for abandoning the fixed andstereotyped notions of the’ self       , home , nation and nationality’.

She offers solutions to meet the unpleasantsituations in a host country and shows the ways to adept to the new trends andever new surroundings . Post colonial theorists analysed theproblems that arise due to mass migration as people are always on the move forvarious reasons in the post- modern world. The mass mobility results in losingone’s native culture owing to dislocation . In the era of globalisationmovements and sudden jerks have become part of one’s life. It includes social , cultural and psychological shifts . The migrated people wander with twinidentities , twin cultures and twin mind – sets in search of their newdestinies .

As Charu Sharma aptly says in his Mapping Migration, “ oldsymbioticties give way to new attitudes as one changes location  ” (xv). Upendra Nanavati in one of hisarticles states as “ tight rope walking and balancing between two cultures asthe victims ” (qtd. in Sharma xvii )Rose Marie Perez Foster explains in hiswriting as immigration is Trauma . This paves a way to the new significant andpotential for ‘ traumatogenic ‘ experiences that may lead to seriouspsychological distress, Thomas tweed Crossing and Dwelling : A Theory of  Religion creates a typology of  three modes of religious mapping of the worldwhich fix Amy Tan’s portrayal of migrational transmutation . According  to Tweed migrational transmutation has threetypes . The first is ‘ Locative’ or ‘ position’, emphasises a person belonging toa place which is associated with the origin and considered it a sacred place.

The second type is ‘ supra-locative’ or ‘ movement’ focuses on transcending spacerather than being located in any one place. The third type is ‘ trans locative’helps the immigrant to move back and forth in history and geography, constantlymediating between their homeland and their adopted land. Most of the immigrants who left theircountry since the 16 th century chose to settle in the United States , becausethe United States is consider to be the land of democracy .  It became the multicultural  land , possesses proper justice for all andthe responses given to the immigrant in the new land colours their life andmoulds them to gain new experience too . Sometimes people try to  leave their country of origin. In thetwentieth century, mass migration happened in search of a new identity, livelihood and somewhere  to escape fromtheir current situation. Amy Tan , Chinese – American writer bringsout her personal experience in her novel The Hundred Secret Senses. In 1945 , China wins the war, and pushes the Japanese imperialists outforever .

During  the war , Jack Yee is auniversity student . He is married and has a child named Kwan. He promises his wife that he will send her money forher livelihood . As a blessing in disguise , he goes to America holding someother person’s document .

He tells his wife to go and live with her sister LiBin –bin in Changmian and wait . “ Once I’m in America , I will send for you andour daughter, I promise “(THSS 180). He leaves his wife who is about to haveanother baby and Kwan becomes helpless. When the nationalists and communists arefighting over China in 1948, Kwan’s father disguises himself with an adoptedname ‘ Jack Yee’ from the papers which he has got from  a drunkard says , “ During civil war , paperslike these were worth many men’s lives and fortunes…I can change my fate”(THSS180).

He knows that the war will make them fall from their line and throwthem to despair in no time. With a heavy heart, he leaves for America to starthis life a new and forgets about the past that he leaves behind . His jiffyplan helps him to go to America to attain peace. In 1949, the communists takeover China and it is impossible for Yee to return to his five- year –olddaughter Kwan because no more planes or boats can leave or enter China. Yee is” eager to be rid of his past , in a hurry to start his new life ” (THSS 180)and he starts a new life with a new wife in America.

Changing up of the name while immigratingfrom one place to another is quite common in an immigrant’s life and it istheir stride to show that they are becoming anew. Talking about the dilemma inher own name Jhumpa Lahiri says in her interview with Jeffrey brown “ It’s whatmy world is , and I’ve always been aware of my (Gogol ) parents came fromCalcutta. I have found myself sort of caught between the world of left behindand still clung to , and also the world that surrounded me at school andeverywhere else, as soon as i set good out of the door (28) This correlates asmooth transcend with the sense of emotive feeling of Amy Tan as well. On theone hand, change of name symbolizes a new identity to them in their new worldleaving the past  behind. But on theother hand, it indicates their superficial living conditions in the newenvironment. Their inner life still retains their eternal identity , China.

Amy Tan beautifully portrays the conflictbetween the Chinese ancestors and the young Chinese-American daughter. Kwan’svoice and presence is that of the ancestral mother. Jack started a new life inAmerica ad was happy with his profession , married Kensfield and had threechildren ; Olivia , Kevin and Tommy . He never talked about his Chinese life, but that does not mean that he was not haunted by the past.

He was haunted andthus he relieved his grieving heart at his death bed to the shock of Kensfield. Though it was a shock for the  modernAmerican family to ever even think about another family in China , Kensfielddecided to identify Kwan and bring her to the U. S. thought of sponsoring Kwan, as a foreign exchange student for a year and try to give her later a wonderfulAmerican life. That is how the Chinese in Kwan started to mixing up with theAmerican in Olivia . Initially Olivia was not happy to welcome her half–sister, who would be an addition to share the meager souvenir of her mother’slove.

Olivia’s mother is busy , had already notime to spend with Olivia , in which a new comer is now to split the share. Butthe busy mother find solace on making Kwan as Olivia’s caretaker . Olivia feelsgrateful for her service , but at the same time she also resents her for havingtaken her mother’s place .

She becomes hysteric and screams, “ She is not mysister! I hate her ! I wish she’d go back to China (THSS 12). Kwan instigated Olivia to learn Chinesethrough her non-stop Chinese talk all through night at the common bedroom theyshared . She influenced her not only with the Chinese language but also withthe Chinese thoughts and secrets which changed her to look at the world in adifferent way.

Olivia disowned her many times and never helped Kwan with herEnglish though she used to earnestly request her. Both of them grew up withtheir differences and after many years, Kwan seems to be same without anychange in her life style. Tan’s plot abound in superstitious beliefs. Most of the older generation of women who had migrated from China sworeallegiance to superstitious . Kwan teaches Olivia to swing Chinese nurserysongs. At night in the twin bed, Kwan keeps on talking how her life was touchedby hardships and personal tragedy . Everything is conveyed to Olivia in theirsecret language , Chinese . Chinese is said to be the secret language betweenKwan and Olivia .

She remarks , “ Kwan infected me with it (Chinese language ) “(THSS 13). Though from childhood Kwan teaches Olivia the Chinese language whereasOlivia teaches English to Kwan . The only change in Kwan’s English over thelast thirty years is in the speed with which she talks .

“ She thinks herEnglish is great . She often corrects her husband , George . ” Not stealed ,” she  will tell him “ stolened ” (THSS23) . But the real fact is she could not even call her sister’s name correctly. When Kwan was eighteen year she introduces more ghostly secrets seen throughher “ yin eyes”(THSS 3) to her sister . Kwan promises her sister ” It’s true . Ihave yin eyes . I can see yin people “(THSS 15).

Unfortunately , Kwan’s Chinesestories backfired and she is diagnosed of a serious mental disorder , and isgiven electro shock treatments . Olivia worries that she cannot lead ahappy  life when Simon is in Elza’sanamnesis . Olivia asks Kwan to have a talk with Elza ghost, Kwan says that shewill be comfortable if it is a Chinese ghost.

But Olivia replies that it is a polishghost . Having yin eyes, Kwan talks about the life after death. She says “ Thenext is segregated ? you can go to the world of yin only if you’re Chinese” ?(THSS110). Olivia asks her sister’s help to rescue Simonfrom this unhealthy obsession , thus paving to be mixed with Kwan’s culture. Kwan , uses her husband secret senses, the hidden instinct and made Simon tocome  out of that Elza’s  thought.

Olivia is glad , Simon forget Elzaand she says that Elza wishes him to marry Olivia but Olivia felt Elzaspeaking, “ Simon don’t forget me. Wait for me. I’m coming back” (THSS 107).

Sheignores the hallucination in the bliss of marrying Simon. They lived happily , after sixteen years ofjoyful life they planned to get divorce due to , mis understanding Kwan isdetermined that they should not be divorced. The Chinese mind try to protectlove, whereas American mind always leads to another way and made a conclusionsabout Simon’s love, which was totally different from Kwan’s opinion. This causetrouble between Kwan and Olivia.  If shehad listened to her sister, she would not have lost her sister in the cave andsuffer throughout with the guilt.

Kwan insists they to go on a trip to chinahoping that the trip to china would save the hositility between Simon andOlivia. Amy tan shows explicitly that, though hercharacter are assimilated in America and almost blends with the mainstream inmany ways , it is only their homeland that provides salvation for the oppressedheart. She gives a balanced detail about both the countries, their positiveaspects and negative aspects. It is true that the immigrants enjoyed betterlife in the migrated country, but at the same time the inner peace can only beprovided in the motherland.

Olivia and Simon are not interested to goalong with each other but Kwan insist them that they can still come to china asfriends. When Olivia was thinking about the name she shall have after divorcingSimon, she realised that her identity was not a standard one. “ I realise I’venever had any sort of identity that suited me, not since I was five at least, when our mother changed our last name to Laguni” (THSS156). From Laguni she had come to be known asOlivia lee than to Olivia Bishop. “ She was a model for multiple personalities”(THSS157). She thought she was suffering from multiple identities. She planned tochange her name as to Yee , which relates to her father’s name. Kwan disclosesthe secret and warms her not to go by any wrong name because Yee was not theirfather’s real name, it was stolen from American drunken robber.

Both of themset on a pace to search for their father’s original opportunity to go to china, because many people in Changmian might still remember their father’s name. Oncethe name is found;                “ Youand me, the two of us, we can change our father’s name back o its true one. Together we can send him at last to the world of yin” (THSS 163)Kwan is very happy in going back o hercountry where she lived until she was eighteen years old.

She would see her Bigmaand reunite with her schoolmates. Most of her schoolmates have not survived thecultural revolution, she was lucky to be in America alive with a family forherself and having a decent life. Her life in America was comparatively happy. This was possible only because of migration. Life in America is also not very easy.

Hoping for a better life in America, everyone aspires to immigrate. It is apre- requisite to  equip them to suit thecountry’s environment. Kwan did not refine her English even after lived nearlythirty years in  America still she couldnot differentiate between ‘ apparent’ ‘ parent’ and ‘ stink’. Consequently shesuffers with the problem of language. As the Chinese find difficulties incoping with America , so does Olivia struggle to cope with the Chinese lifestyle. In china Olivia finds a lot of differencebetween America and Chinese life style. On the very first day Kwan instructsher not to sleep beyond five in the morning.

” This is china. Everyone else isup. Only you’re asleep “(THSS186). She further instructs “ your American ideadoesn’t work here.

Kwan goes on “. In china you always  responsible for someone else, no matter what”(THSS199). Law was practised china.

Olivia’s American way of logical reasoningsuddenly disappears, when she loses Simon in the cave. In the process of rescuing Simon, Kwan  loses her life, through her help again they were reunited. However American Oliviais , the Chinese in her has been in her blood which made her to think about hersisters preaching about the hundred secret senses. She had learnt the realityof life from Kwan :                                Theworld is not a place but the vastness of soul.                                 Andthe soul is nothing more than love, limitless,                                Endless, all that moves us toward knowing what is true.                                Ionce thought love was supposed to be nothing but bliss.                                Ifpeople we love die, then they are lost only to our ordinary sense . (THSS 358).

Having taken the memory of the country oftheir origin to the host country, these immigrants get accustomed to the newenvironment , even though it is their new destiny in their life after facingthe harsh realities during the war in china . But on the other hand their senseof belonging is still in oscillation, placing their foot firm in the new land, psychologically , their thoughts and mindset oscillate to and from the countryof origin and the place they have adopted . But their next generations fulfiltheir dreams by visiting the country of origin . Some of Tan’s characterswitnessed their origin china as a transformed modernised china and pointed outas ‘ Americanized China ‘. In fact, towards the end every character inTan’s fiction realizes that they do not want to leave their heritage behind asLahiri resolves in one of her fiction The Namesake,  “ Things that should never have happened, thatseemed out of place and wrong , these were what prevailed , what endured , inthe end ” (287) Bridging the gap between the native land and the adopted land , the individual and society , from various cultural upheavals , the diasporasspread liberation in the modern era. Cohen rightly portrays.

Moreover, the sense of uprootedness, disconnection, loss and estrangement, which                                 thetraditionally – recognized diasporas hitherto morally appropriated , maynow                             signify something more general about the humancondition. Why not celebrate the                                 creative, enriching side of living in ‘ Babylon’, the radiance of difference ? (174 ). Tan accomplishes the real and unreal as theprime focus in  The Hundred SecretSenses , where Olivia towards the end finds herself believing that ” truthlies not in logic, but in hope “( THSS 398 ).  This novel links both time and space. It bridges the two continentsthrough the experiences of the mothers and the daughters culture and ethnicidentity are possible to the daughters only they can fully understand andidentify themselves with their mother through the various stages in attainingwomanhood. The cultural experiences are shared between the mothers and thedaughters from isolated monologues into meaningful dialogues . Tan hassuccessfully brought for the shifting up of the character from china to theUnited States to China.

Generally setting include geographic location in whichthe story takes place and the historical moment in time of imperial China, about ancient Chin and Qing dynasties . The women’s vulnerability finds assurancesof security which allow its setting of ‘ real’ character or ‘ natural’ characterin the cross – cultural relations has been liberated from its ‘ fictitious ‘ overlay WORK CITIED Foster, RoseMarie Perez. Theory ”  When immigration Is Trauma : Guidelines forthe Individual and Family  Clinican “.

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