
Cultural Crisis In Amy Tan's The Joy Luck Club

Abstract

Children become more appreciative of their parents as they become adults. In *The Joy Luck Club*, four daughters' attitudes toward their mothers shift as the girls grow and understand that after all, their mothers aren't that special.

Key words: Crisis, Culture, dream, Nationality, Aborigines

As children, the daughters in this book are ashamed of their mothers and don't take them very seriously, dismissing them as quirky and odd. "I could never tell my father . . . How could I tell him my mother was crazy? They don't try to comprehend their culture, which is a big part of understanding their traditional Chinese mothers. On page 6, one of the daughters says, 'In the first place, I can never remember things that I don't understand,' referring to her mother's Chinese words. The girls just express their shame when their mothers show pride in them. One daughter reveals her guilt when she tells her mom, 'I wish you wouldn't do that, saying I'm your daughter to everyone.'

The girls are unable to respond to their mothers because they have been born in another country. All four of the *Joy Luck* mothers need to appreciate their daughters, pass on their spirit after they've gone, and realize what they've been through for their girls. On her journey to a new life, one mother dreams of doing this: 'I'm going to have a daughter like me in America. No one's going to look down on her. And she'll be too full to take any sorrow at all! She's going to know my meaning because I'm going to give her this swan. It takes my good intentions with it. Another mother is preparing how to give this understanding to her daughter.

She has no chi [my daughter]. How can I leave the world without my soul leaving her? That's what I'm going to do. I'm putting my history together and see a thing that has already happened. The agony that looses my soul. I will hold that pain in my hand until it becomes hard and shiny, more clear.

And then my ferociousness will return. I'm going to use this harsh pain to penetrate the tight skin of my daughter and relax her tiger spirit. She's going to fight me, because that's two tigers' nature. Yet I'm going to win and give her my spirit that's why a mother loves a daughter.

Things don't really turn out to be the way mothers expect, however. Once they discover the prejudices of their children, their hopes and dreams are broken. On page 282, a mother laments, 'She sees a little, old lady when my daughter looks at me. She would see a tiger lady if she had chuming [inside knowledge of things]. One daughter sees the rest of the mothers' anxiety as she tells them she knows nothing about her dead mother that she can pass on:

They're afraid. In me, they see their own daughters, just as ignorant, just as unmindful of all the truths and hopes they have brought to America. They see daughters who become irritated when their mothers speak Chinese, who think they are dumb when they explain things in broken English. We see daughters who will bear grandchildren born from generation to generation

without any connecting hope.

Though, this distrust doesn't last. The two generations, as the daughters age, learn that after all, they are not so special. One mother says, 'She's putting her head side by side next to me, and we're looking in the mirror. I think these two eyes are the same! The same happiness, the same sorrow, the same good fortune, the same mistakes'

One daughter sits down to play the piano she had declined to touch before defying her mother following her mother's death. In contrast with this child, Amy Tan uses the example of two piano pieces: 'The piece I played for the recital. Was on the page's left side. And this is the first time. I saw the bit on the right side. It had a lighter melody yet [the recital piece and] the same flowing rhythm. It was quicker, but longer. Even after watching both of them. I found that they are the same song in two halves'.

Problem between mother and daughters

The daughters become more appreciative of their mothers as they grow up to be adults. With time, their attitudes change to build an understanding and respect that wasn't there before: I realized what I was fighting for. It was a scared child for me, who had run away to what I had hoped to be a safer place a long time ago.

And hiding behind my invisible walls in this location, I realized what was on the other hand: the attacks on her side. Her deep weapons. Her amazing capacity to find my vulnerable points. But in the brief instant that I had peered over the barriers I could finally see what was really there: an old woman, a wok for her armor, a knitting needle for her sword.

In conclude, the girls, as children, did not understand their mothers or their culture. In a different world, the daughters were born. Their views of their mothers, though, shifted as they grew up and realized that after all, they were not so different from them. Their traditional Chinese mothers are finally understood and appreciated.

In final, as children, the daughters did not understand their mothers or their culture. The daughters were being raised in a different world. Their view of their mothers changed, though, as they grew up and realized that they weren't so different from them after all. They finally understood and respected their traditional and Chinese mothers.

June's participation at the table with older women allows for some kind of intergenerational exchange. Her mother's tragic tale— escaping the aggressive Japanese during the Second World War, leaving behind her twin babies and never realizing their fate— is revealed through June's recollections.

Otherwise, the storytellers of the different generations are segregated from each other by the novel's structure. It is no narrative trick, for realise and read on the mothers and daughters hardly know anything about each others' lives. As narrators, they speak to the reader rather than to each other.

Looking back at their childhood in China, every mother has a tale of misery. Until the age of nine, An-mei is brought up by her grandma and aunt. Readers are openly contemptuous of her

absent mother, who, reader learn, is one of the few concubines of a rich man who lives in another part of China.

Lindo is sold off by her poor family at an early age to be the wife of the favorite son of a wealthy local family. Ying-ying is from a privileged family, but is doomed to bad marriage. Our daughters seem to learn little about the backgrounds of our mother. As mentioned by Waverly Jong.

Their daughters hardly seem to know about their mothers' histories. As Waverly Jong describes how her remorselessly critical mother Lindo, a virtuoso of fault-finding, undermines her confidence in her husband-to-be, it is only the reader who knows what reason Lindo has to doubt the prospect of marital happiness.

Work cited

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