

**A FOCUS ON THE CULTURAL TRANSITION AND IDENTITY OF WOMAN CHARACTER'S IN THE NOVEL  
'THE BONESETTER'S DAUGHTER' BY AMY TAN'**

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“The Bonesetter’s Daughter” is the third novel of Amy Tan. Focusing on the cultural transition and barriers, the story tells us as to how the special woman character, Gu Lin Xin’s ghost helps to guide Luling, her daughter and Ruth’s mother, out of the hazardous situations in China.

The novel focuses the women characters from Chinese or Chinese-American backgrounds. Flashing back to her innocent childhood and adolescence, Ruth comes to realize that the mother-daughter relation is rooted in her identity crisis living as both American and Chinese; her Chinese mother’s silence and frustrations of living in a foreign country, and the miscommunication between her mother and herself. More important, is as Luling is losing her memory, Ruth recovers her mother’s autobiography that is the representation of her mother’s past memories written in back to the present America, where Ruth resumes the role as a story teller, where she confines the change in culture feeling her mother...

“ I am an American, Ruth shouted. I have a right to privacy to pursue my own happiness, not yours!”. (BSD 34)

As Ruth is a ghost- writer, she reads and edits various books. While Luling her mother gives her, her manuscripts written in Chinese and also her mother’s, Precious Auntie’s manuscripts. Coming to Precious Auntie’s character, she undergoes a cultural transition from being born as a girl but she evolves into a responsible son as her father does not bind her legs, as foot binding is a tradition followed in China. Precious Auntie in the only child of her parents, she changes from a traditional Chinese woman to an dependent woman. She refused to have her feet bounded and learn to be an independent woman.

“... Let me do whatever a son might do. I learned to read and write, to ask question, to play riddles, to write eight legged poems to walk alone and admire nature”.

(BSD 56)

Here precious Auntie explains as to how her father changed himself when it came to be his daughter, because he had seen woman's pain, struggle and sufferings; he doesn't want his daughter to undergo the same that is the reason that he doesn't bind her legs. Women in China were not much educated, they were treated inferior. But in the case of precious Auntie, there is a cultural transition when her father, the Bone setter's attitude changes, that makes precious Auntie to learn to read and write. Coming to Luling, she explains that learning and writing Chinese characters is a different feeling to her that changes her completely to a Chinese though she is now living in America.

She also explains that it is difficult. Writing Chinese makes her think differently, feel differently, Luling was really different she was writing and painting, she was very patient, organized and more decision. Luling also asks Ruth, whether she would feel the presence of Precious Auntie guiding her hand, Luling wants to know what was Ruth's experience about Precious Auntie.

"Forgive me that she speaks only English. It must be hard for you to communicate through her this way. But now I know that she can hear me". (BSD 109)

After speaking with Precious Auntie Luling asks her to forgive her daughter as she was born and brought up in American culture. It will be difficult for Precious Auntie to communicate with her. Luling also reveals to Ruth that her life had become sad due to which she tends to forget things as prescribed by doctor;

"She thinks come to America everything so easy". (BSD 120)

Luling explains about the Chinese culture as to how hard it is working in China, and how lazy the Americans and American culture is.

"She has no one to talk to in Chinese of course her mind is little rusted. If you stop speaking, no oil for the squeaky wheel". (BSD 132)

Luling goes to a doctor with Ruth for check up for her illness. Doctor advises to keep Luling always occupied with the work someone had to speak to her to make her lonely life into a better life. Luling talks about precious Auntie as to how culturally she is turning at the end of the world. Luling predicts that Precious Auntie was apparently saying that about a bone doctor and she would be happy for Ruth to know about it.

"Why I have daughter like you" why I live? why I don't die long time ago? Luling was huffing and shouting". (BSD 140)

Luling is annoyed with the habits of Ruth. As Ruth was Americanized she opts for some American habits like smoking which makes Luling feels ashamed because she compares herself with the other daughters. Luling compares the culture of both the countries and tries to make her understand that Luling came to America in search of identity for her and for her daughter is future. Luling also explains about the woman in china as to how she had to listen to elders, that is the culture followed in China, and also explains as to how she changed her attitude in understanding Precious Auntie's views.