

(PROF. NAZNEEN KHAN , DEPT OF ENGLISH AND MEL , UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW)

M.A SEMESTER TWO

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON : *THE WOMAN WARRIOR*

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON

- A Chinese-American author and Professor Emeritus at the University of California.
- A feminist and pacifist who campaigned against the wars in Vietnam and Iraq.
- Born on Oct 27, 1940 in California to first generation Chinese immigrant parents.
- Has written several works of fiction and non-fiction focusing on the experiences of Chinese Americans.
- Major works :
 - The Woman Warrior : Memoir of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976)
 - China Men* (1980)
 - Hawai'i One Summer* (1987)
 - Through the Black Curtain* (1987)
 - Tripmaster Monkey : His Fake Book* (1989)
 - To Be the Poet* (2002)
 - The Fifth Book of Peace* (2003)
 - Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace* (2006)
 - I Love a Broad Margin to My Life* (2011)

Awards and Recognitions :

- National Book Critics Circle Award for *The Woman Warrior* (1976)
- National Endowment for the Arts Writers Award, 1980, 1982.
- National Humanities Medal , 1997.
- Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asian American Literary Awards , 2006.
- Fitzgerald Award for Achievement in American Literature , 2011.
- National Medal of Arts , 2013.
- Her writings are reflective of her cultural heritage and her understanding of both sexual and racial oppression.
- Her works often blend fiction with non-fiction.

THE WOMAN WARRIOR : MEMOIR OF A GIRLHOOD AMONG GHOSTS (1976)

- Maxine Hong Kingston's first book .
- Published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1976.
- Blend of autobiography and, what Kingston claims to be , old Chinese folktales.
- Won the National Book Critics Circle Award 1976.
- Was named one of Time Magazine's top non-fiction books of 1970s.
- Has been translated into numerous languages, including Chinese.
- The book examines the struggles of being a woman and a minority.
- The book has five interconnected chapters which integrate Kingston's lived experience with a series of spoken stories that combine Chinese history, myths and beliefs.
- Five chapters of the book are:
 - ' No Name Woman'
 - White Tigers
 - Shaman
 - At the Western Palace
 - A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe
- The five chapters of the book focus on the stories of five women – Kingston's long-dead aunt , "No Name Woman"; a mythical female warrior , Fa Mu Lan ; Kingston's mother , Brave Orchid ; Kingston's aunt , Moon Orchid and Kingston herself.
- Kingston analyzes the female identity of Chinese-American women through criticism of misogyny in Chinese culture and racism towards Chinese-Americans in the US.
- The book focuses on the relationship between mother and daughter, reflecting aspects of Kingston's life and emphasizing upon the dynamics of female relationships as a whole in a patriarchal social set up.
- Criticism of the book :
 - Though acclaimed by many *The Woman Warrior* has been criticized by several critics , including playwright and novelist ,Frank Chin , who accuses Kingston of "liberally adapting traditional stories to collude with white racist stereotypes and invent a "fake" Chinese-American culture that is more palatable to mainstream".
 - Several Asian female scholars have also severely criticized Kingston's work. According to Shirley Geok-Lin Lim, a professor of English at the University of California, Kingston's "representations of patriarchal, abusive Chinese history were playing to a desire to look at Asians as an inferior spectacle".
 - Writer Katheryn M. Fong accuses Kingston of "distortion of the histories of China and Chinese America "and denounces her for her "over-exaggerated" depiction of Chinese and Chinese –American cultural misogyny.