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Dislocation and Cultural Assimilation in Jhumba
Lahiri's *The Namesake*

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Dedication

To my one and only my mother

Abir

Dedication

To my FATHER, who always had confidence in me, inspired me with his kindness and loved me unconditionally, to his pure soul I dedicate this work

To my MOTHER, who always supported me, stood by me and helped me in all time of writing this thesis

To my two sisters and two brothers who bring joy and happiness into my heart in times of depression and losing hope.

I record my deep sense of gratitude to all of you

Chaima

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Abstract

This dissertation presents the different experiences and problems faced by immigrants in an alien land, in Jhumpa Lahiri the namesake, the novel reveals many authentic facts about what an immigrant came across away from his/her homeland, Jhumpa narrates the novel in a diasporic context, where the Ganguli family who came from India tries to put a definition for itself as a Bengali family in the united states of America, this study is an attempt to analyze the novel and to cover the main station and events during the Ganguli's life in the united states, however, the work should prove how Jhumpa Lahiri develops the themes of dislocation and cultural assimilation in the novel .besides it aims to explore where the immigrant writer goes beyond conventional wisdom and creates the 'third space' where they create their identity as transnational. Homi K. Bhabha's concept of 'third space' (third space where we negotiate between different identities) as the common ground of negotiation and transformation, which is neither assimilation nor otherness but represents the history of coalition building and the transnational and cultural diasporic connection. It deals also with the cultural and psychological issues of the protagonist characters in the novel by going through a deep analysis to cover the socio-cultural dimensions describing and presenting the characters and all the events in which they passed through The study requires a Sociohistorical background about the immigrants, specifically the Indian ones and their status in America. In addition to that, this work explores the meaning of assimilation and dislocation in order to give a comprehensible analysis about this diasporic experiences

The ultimate goal of the study is to expose the author's purpose behind writing such a Novel, to highlight and shed light on many themes related to diaspora and identity such as: hybridity, third space , ambivalence, assimilation, and displacement according to the situation of each character

Keywords:, diaspora, dislocation, cultural assimilation, identity, hybridity, third space.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

“Migrant communities bear the imprint of diaspora, hybridization and difference in their very constitution.”

(Stuart Hall 232)

Migration, mobility, and travel are central to today's world of rapid transformation, quick movements, and allegedly easy adaptation to life in new surroundings, to counter such vision promoting unrealistic views.

People migrate to another country for a better lifestyle and to augment their standard of living. This betterment of life sometimes leaves them with bitter experience, they struggle to confront the new atmosphere, culture, and society of the new country. As a result, the immigrants and their generations face a dilemma between keeping and practicing their ancestor culture and the new country culture, the dual cultures lead them dealing with a double feeling which contradicts each other; the contrast feeling that is caused by certain matter, people or action at the same time can be claimed as ambivalence. The basis problem of diasporic writings is the feelings of dislocation without roots and the struggles they pass through to construct an identity of their own.

In the same sphere Salman Akhtar notes, immigration from one country to another is a complex psychological process with lasting effects on an individual's identity, the dynamic movements caused by an admixture of culture shock and grieving over the loss inherent in migration, bit by bit offer approach to psych structural change and the development of the hybrid character. This journey of belonging starts from one place or culture and is substituted with the virtual other while the virtual former still has its impact

and shadow, trapped between the two, the displaced want emancipation, searching everywhere for other alternatives which eventually end nowhere.

Rather than freely moving nomad, remaining distant from other cultures migrants needs to negotiate their identity while traveling and entering new spaces as seen in the widespread use of such critical terms as Homi Bhabha's "colonial mimicry" and hybridity. For Bhabha cultural contacts and the experience of in-betweenness often felt by migrants and refugees generate new, hybrid identities that resist conventional categorization and nationalisms.

The detachment from one's native land and culture gives a certain kind of trauma to the soul but still, people try harder to blend and seize the moments of settling down into that whole new world. People often pay price for the relocation they chose to make and in Lahiri's fictions, we are told such stories of dislocation, assimilation, in-betweenness. Jhumpa Lahiri is one of the most eminent Indo- American writers. She is one among the diasporic writers, carries with her the strikingly fresh Indian sensibility abroad, and lets it out through her fiction in an impressive form. Since she is the child of immigration and multiculturalism, she could portray the characters both in the light of native and alien culture. Deeply felt by the importance of family relationship and attachment with the relatives in the home country, Jhumpa Lahiri has experienced the trauma of failing to find her identity in the new land where she could never have a sense of belonging. Though these displaced realities and self-imposed exile are in many ways a calamity, this existence acts as a stimulus and enables Jhumpa Lahiri to excel in fiction writing. As a popular youthful, author of Indian foundation, she is

such a delegate figure for the female issue in Diaspora. She investigates the thoughts of cultural and individual separations and identities.

Lahiri emphasizes not only the immigrants who leave somewhere called home to make a new home in the United States but also the endless process of comings and goings that create familial, cultural, linguistic and economic ties across national borders. Her characters live in the middle of, riding two universes, making their personality transitional. Moreover, the displacement also gives rise to the concept of double consciousness and unhomeliness, which are the two features of postcolonial diasporic identity. It is apt to quote Lois Tyson who analyses this concept thus, “Double consciousness often produced an unstable sense of self, which was heightened by the forced migration colonialism frequently caused. Being ‘unhomed’ is not the same as being homeless.

To be unhomed is to feel not comfortable even in your own home since you are definitely not at home in yourself: your social personality emergency has made you a mental evacuee, as it were. Accordingly, diasporic personality is plural and is consistently in transition.

Determining the identity and cultural dimension of a person is not that easy thing when he is located between the contexts of two different cultures, or when they are displaced from their home country, due to any reason, immediately find themselves in an entirely new territory. Except here, the so-called ‘foreign’ is in majority, while the diasporic unit is the foreign intrusion immediately find themselves in an entirely new territory within this new environment, the members of the newly transferred community hold a singular space of their own where it becomes difficult to melt in the new

society they are in and forget their native culture or stick to the native culture and refuse any sort of change.

This paper is an investigation of dislocation and cultural assimilation in Jumba Lahiri the namesake; this study will focus on the conflicts faced by the three protagonists (Gogol, Ashima, and Moushumi) as they leave their native land (India) to the more modernized world of the United States.

In which concepts such as dislocation, assimilation, and hybridity are applied in this paper to study the hybrid and dislocated character of the Indian immigrant as depicted in Lahiri's novel it will look for signs of assimilation, hybridity, and dislocation to find out whether multiculturalism produces an acceptance or a resistance to Western culture. The primary question posed here is: How does cultural assimilation and alienation give influence to the first and second generations?

In accordance with the above stated problem, this study will equally deal with following questions:

1. How does space impact characters psychology and mood in the novel?
2. How were hybridity and third space experienced in the novel?
3. How can native culture cause an identity confusion?

The primary pursuit of this study is to contribute to the academic world with a new study on the problem of the new tendency of dislocation and assimilation among Indian immigrants. Another investigation of how the characters manage finally, despite the challenges of a foreign culture, to develop new anti-monolithic models of cultural growth and exchange. As a result, they succeed in embracing a new culture while protecting their Bengali heritage.

Many researchers have shown interest in this topic and in Jhumpa Lahiri's literary corpus for their investigations, critics have focused on the issue of dislocation and immigrants that is the most treated or discussed in Jhumpa Lahiri is *The Namesake*.

For the children of immigrants who were born in America , the site of the confusion is their household or parental home in America where the Indian culture and customs still exist even if in a diluted form , as Natalie Friedman writes about them in her “ from hybrids to tourists : children of immigrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* “ they can only define home as the place where their two cultures merge , the literal and metaphorical location is in their parents' house.

This research gives a lot of information about Indian writers to spell out their opinions and ideas into their works. From this research above, the writer can conclude that most of the conflicting analysis is still distracted by other things such as long explanation about Diaspora journey of the character and the crisis identity. This article helps the writer to gain more ideas because they show conflicts of Indian writers.

On the other hand , Dashrath Gatt in his research 'Re-Defining Identity : A Critique of Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*' stated that in her novel *The Namesake* Lahiri deals with the issue of dislocation and relocation of human being , clash and reconciliation of cultures and finally the question of identity faced by the expat a discourse about the immigrants experience and the clash of cultures in the US at the heart the novel is about parents and children and at the most basic level , this is a story of family that is coming to grip with who they are and where they are , under what circumstances to

them. In addition, it deals with the lives of second-generation diaspora, their relationship with their parent's homeland, and with the country of birth.

From this research, the writer concludes that in the process of assimilation between the two cultures, the immigrants tend to be confused about their identity and might lose on the way; it makes them suffer from psychological conflicts.

In this research, the writer will discuss the suffering, sacrifices, and struggle of assimilation in the novel *The Namesake* and the writer will also show Jhumpa Lahiri's perspectives about cultural assimilation as the second generation. This research experience an new flow that can come from assimilation and dislocation that cause the immigrants to create a third space for themselves which differentiate from other studies by focusing on the hybrid world they create and the big whole that is caused between the immigrant generations and how a native culture can confuse one's identity .

The importance of this research arises from the fact that it shed light on Indian immigrant's issues and conflicts in American society since the two societies are an incomplete paradox. Another important aspect of this study is its multidisciplinary nature since it uses, cultural, social, and psychological, and archetypal studies as frames of analysis for the problematic.

As any literary research, this study will be based on a qualitative approach to research, therefore, a detailed analysis of books, articles, journals, and thesis is curried to find and discuss the various aspects of the subject matter.

The study attempts to bring on the topic by using both the descriptive and analytical methods to discover how dislocation and assimilation affect the Indian immigrant's cultural aspects and believes.

Jhumpa Lahiri novel *The Namesake* provides a fertile land to discuss the thorny subject of cultural identity and how it is affected by displacement beside how a cultural dimension of a person is revealed or founded through cultural assimilation and that's what motivates us to search in such topic to know how one's cultural definition for himself is founded in such context and how it is.

In line with these research objectives and the main research questions, this study is divided into two chapters, the first chapter is entitled: Conceptualization Diaspora ,Indian Diaspora And Their Complexities : A Sociohistorical background, this chapter explores the context in which the corpus was written, shedding light on the Indian diasporic community in the united states, plus the definition of one of the important issues faced by Indians in the American society which are dislocation and assimilation and the generational division paradigm to those concepts.

The second chapter is entitled: Alienation and Assimilation Diasporic Conflicts in the First and Second Generation Immigrants, in this chapter we are going to investigate how immigrants by two generations deals, or behaviors when they across these changing first by being away from home and second following patterns they do not want or seems to have no meaning.

CHAPTER ONE:

CONCEPTUALIZING DIASPORA, INDIAN DIASPORA AND THEIR COMPLEXITIES: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

I. Introduction

No country can deny the impact of diaspora, whether it is a developed or a developing country, across the globe, the diaspora establishes their identity, impact and hybrid culture in the host countries diaspora is nothing more than the idea of dislocation and the maintenance of contacts with a real or imaginary homeland. Besides, they try to assimilate, acculturate at least and integrate into their host countries in their dislocated and unhomely state, with some differences and degrees from generation to another

The nature of the term has been celebrated as expressing notions of hybridity, heterogeneity, identity, fragmentation and (re)construction, double consciousness, fractures of memory, ambivalence, roots and routes, discrepant cosmopolitanism, multi- locationality and so forth”(Bauman 324). writers from every tended to idealize this phenomenon that opens a new way to tell the forgotten stories of people who cross the borders of their lands thus the Indian writers ride this flow to use their pens to write about Indian migrant and Jhumpa Lahiri was one of the famous figures who wrote about this period. She has clarified and showed what is really to be considered as other in others home.

This chapter focuses on the social and the historical context of the period presented in the novel, in addition to focusing particrally on the station of Indian immigrant and their strategies in adjusting new home .

I.1.Diaspora

Globally, in excess of 258 million individuals, around three percent of the total population, are considered as global immigrants and the number keeps on rising each year coming; about because of innovative advancement during

the hundreds of years – less expensive transportation, improvement of avionics industry, better access to voyaging, exceptionally created framework; advanced education, free development of individuals, products, administrations, and capital, and correspondence by and large have expanded the limit and want to move. Overall, not all transients decide to leave their nations of starting point every year. An expanding number of immigrants have driven away from their homes for an intricate blend of reasons, including political flimsiness, inside clashes and common wars, neediness, absence of fundamental needs, for example, human services, instruction, water, nourishment, lodging, and the results of natural corruption and environmental change, just as the more 'customary' drivers of constrained relocation, for example, mistreatment and struggle. In which it creates what is known as the dispersion or diaspora that separates the person from his/her homeland and the land s/he sought refuge

I.1.1. Origin and Development

Etymologically the term diaspora is derived from the ancient Greek verb διασπορά (diasporá, “dispersion”), from διασπείρω (diaspeírō, “to scatter”), from διά- (diá-, a prefix indicating motion across or in all directions) + σπείρω (speírō, “to sow”). That means, “To scatter about”¹. In this way, the word shows the dispersed individuals who had to leave their country and settled in another Place over the world. This term was also associated with Jewish people after the destruction of Jerusalem and razing of the walls of its temple in 586 BC by the Romans, which led to the subjugation and removal of the key military, common, and strict pioneers of

¹ Diaspora, in <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diaspora> (23/03/2020)

Judah and their outcast in Babylon. Priests held that this destiny was anticipated in Deuteronomy (28: 58 – 68) where God had cautioned that anyone who ignored his law would be dispersed to all finishes. There they would 'discover no harmony', while they would also endure 'an antsy brain, diminish eyes and a bombing craving'. 'Babylon', then the capital of the Mesopotamian Empire, became the code word for, signifying a place of loneliness and estrangement, where they were held in captivity.

In that discourse, William Safran pointed out that: "Diaspora referred to a very specific case that of the exile of the Jews from the holy land and their dispersal throughout several parts of the globe" (Safran 8). At that point, it turned into a consistent allegory for individuals who endured "loss of countries and ethnocide savagery, for example, "expatriates, expellees, political evacuees, outsider inhabitant, migrants, ethnic, and racial minorities.

In contrast to what Safran asserts. Gabriel Sheffer argues, with the work of Amstrong in his paper "*mobilized and proletarian diasporas*" published in the "*American political sciences review in 1976 (Dorai et al...1998)*", Gabriel Sheffer in his book himself *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* (1986) wrote that; it is a mistake to maintain the concept of diaspora only for the Jewish people because many others have existed before "such as Nabataeans, Phoenicians or Assyrians" also due to; the second half of the XIXth century some groups with many similarities with Jewish diaspora appeared in Europe now it has a newer and diverse meaning all over the world. In the mid of the 20th century, the term diaspora to anybody of people or ethnic population who are either forced or induced to leave their traditional homelands, And too much according to Tololyan the term today

shares meanings with larger semantics domains that include words like immigrants, expatriate, refugee, guest –worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community (4).

Presently the term predominantly implies individuals' wilful or mighty development from their country to an alternate country. Thus, the diaspora has become an umbrella term, which incorporates the two individuals' intentional and commanding development, for the most part, however not solely, for better life chances. The term diaspora is being utilized allegorically for the displaced people, migrants, ostracizes, or the exiles. All of them experience resettlement and separation in their life. Anna Harutyunyan says in her article “Testing the Theory of Diaspora from the Field” that: “The Diasporic condition is a combination of being uprooted and placed in a temporary setting”(Hartuyunyan 8). In which khaching tololying adds:

A diaspora was understood as a social formation engendered by catastrophic violence or, at the very least, by coerced expulsion from homeland followed by settlement in other countries and among alien host societies, and crucially, capped by generations of survival as a distinct community that worked hard to maintain its old identity or to create new ones that sustained its difference from the host society. (Tololying 8)

In the present significance, when the individuals of diaspora face wilful removing from their own territory, they may reserve the option to return to their country in the event that they need. Maybe, this possibility is less workable for individuals who are escaping from war or genuine unrest.

They have scarcely any opportunity to come back to their country. Since the term diaspora infers re/settlement in another spot, it should be separated from terms, for example, transnationalism or voyaging. Lily Cho proposes in her article that: “Diaspora must be differentiated from transnationalism, not only because the crossing of national borders does not necessarily define diasporic subjectivity, but also because to be marked by loss”(Cho 9).

Then again, James Clifford proposes that diaspora cannot be converged with voyaging because voyaging is only a transitory move where diaspora is progressively consistent (307-308). In any case, venturing out methods heading off to a better place however that is just for an impermanent time and it has nothing to do with a personality emergency or some other diasporic issues.

I.1.2. Features of diaspora

During the '90s, many typologies were proposed to understand and to describe the diasporas, in which many scholars like (Clifford, 1994: 304; Chaliand and Rageau, 1995; Cohen, 1997: 22-27; Van Hear, 1998: 5; Gillespie et al., 1999) make reference to Safran's (1991) extensive work on the common features of a diaspora. They have become the basic tenets used to assess whether an ethnic group is in fact diasporic in nature, William, Safran made a huge step in the right direction in his first list of the main characteristics of diasporas. He is properly relaxed in allowing that no contemporary diaspora will meet all the desiderata. However, he maintained that the concept of a diaspora could be applied when members of an 'expatriate minority community' share several of the following features:

- They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from an original 'centre' to two or more foreign regions.
- They retains a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland including its location, history, and achievements.
- They believe they are not – and perhaps can never be – fully accepted in their host societies and so remain partly separate.
- Their ancestral home is idealized and it is thought that, when conditions are favorable, either they or their descendants should return.
- They believe all members of the diaspora should be committed to the maintenance or restoration of the original homeland and to its safety and prosperity.
- They continue in various ways to relate to that homeland and their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are in an important way defined by the existence of such a relationship.

Cohen (1997) has a nine points list to complement Safran's he avers that dispersed communities should have at least these common characteristics to be recognized as diasporas:

- Dispersal, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions
- Expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of a trade or to further colonial ambitions
- A collective memory and myth about the homeland
- idealisation of a putative ancestral home and a commitment of or its maintenance or creation
- Development of a return movement that gains collective approbation
- A strong ethnic group consciousness based on a common history and belief in a common fate

- A troubled relationship with the host society suggesting a lack of acceptance.
- A sense of empathy and solidarity with co_ethnic members in other countries
- The possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism (p.25-26).

While according to Gabriel Sheffer in, there are three basic requirements for a people to qualify as diasporas; which they are stated as the following:

- Firstly, they must be of “migrant origins” not necessarily the victims, forced explosion I.e. that they have to identify themselves that they are different in terms of culture language, religion, etc... from the host land
- Secondly, they must be residing and acting in the host land, which means having the power to show presence to speak.
- Third, they must retain “sentimental relations” with the homelands, which means retraining a connection to the roots but not necessarily in physical terms.

I.1.3. Types of diaspora

Many researchers and scholars, such as Cohen, Shaffer, and Safran, have shown great interest in the scope of research in the diaspora, with the old diaspora and the new diaspora divisions, and what each of these two contains. Nevertheless, more than that, people in the past did not leave their homelands due to historical reasons such as trade, wars, or talk. Immigration may not be related only to developed countries.

In that discourse Robin Cohen in his book, “Global Diasporas” have introduced five types of diaspora as the following:

1. Victim diasporas in which it refers to the Jews, Africans, Armenians, Irish, Palestinian refugees.

2. Imperial diaspora refers to the colonial Ancient Greeks, British, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch who used to conquer countries in Africa and East Asia.
3. Labour diaspora refers to unprofessional workers service Indentured Indians, Chinese and Japanese; Sikhs, Turks, Italians.
4. Trade diaspora that refers to the traders and business like the Venetians, Lebanese, Chinese, Today's Indians, Japanese.
5. Cultural/post-modern Caribbean peoples; Today's Chinese, Indians.

1.2.Indian Diaspora

Perhaps no other diaspora in the world is characterized by such diversity in its population like the Indian diaspora in terms of culture including languages regions, religion, and forms of social stratification, thus the Indian diaspora is a generic term that includes all the people who migrated from different territories that are currently within the border of the Indian republic, emigration, from India has been widely varied in terms of the historical context, causes and consequences of migration from India as much as the social characteristics such as level of education, caste, gender, class, place of origin, the religious and linguistic affiliation of these immigrants.

The emergence of the Indian diaspora is underpinned by a series of episodes while a scattering of the population had formed it in that, William, Safran regards the Indian diaspora as a genuine one, in that its trans-continental has an extended history, plays an auxiliary role within host societies and tends to be integrationist as well as particularist (Mishra 40_41).

The history of the Indian diaspora shows that it was formed under different socio-economic and political contexts over a period. Landy et al has

categorized the Indian emigration from the historical to the contemporary period into six broad phases are explained under four broad patterns of emigration and they are as follow (203-4):

The pre-colonial era

The historical backdrop of movement from India goes back in any event 2,000 years. The principal relocation from advanced India occurred at around the hour of the rule of Emperor Kanishka (around the first century AD). This gathering of migrators was the Romani individuals, presently referred to all around the globe as “wanderers”, from what today is the Indian province of Rajasthan. They emigrated from India towards the northwest and in the end settled in Eastern Europe.

Another major migration from the Indian subcontinent started in around 500 AD when a group immigrated to Southeast Asia. And established Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms in several places in today’s known as Sirilanka and Indonesia .where Indians and Indian Kingdoms have disseminated across the seas due to their The navigational skills of people along the Indian coastal cities assisted the rulers to expand the horizons of their Kingdoms. Indians had trade links with East Africa by different groups such as The Ismailis, The Horas, The Ranya's and The Chettiars under the banner of Nattu kottai Chettiar Association and East Asia merchants who went to east Africa or Southeast Asia before the 16th century and also migration of various groups (trades, farmers) to neighboring countries (Sirilanka, Nepal).

However, in all these early movements, it is not sensible – or even adequate – to apply the name of “Indian Diaspora” to the relatives of those

travelers who left India numerous hundreds of years back. These gatherings' intermixture with the neighborhood populace throughout the hundreds of years has been incredible to the point that they dispensed with all hints of such an "Indian" character. Accordingly, these individuals are not, at this point considered PIOs ("People of Indian Origin").

The colonial era

Streams of the most recent 175 years started with the time of British rule. The British had vital bits of India lands under their influence before the end of the eighteenth century and they dominated more areas in the nineteenth century. Following the cancelation of slavery, first by the British in 1833 and along these lines, by other provincial powers, for example, France, the Netherlands, and Portugal, the settlements critically required work, especially on sugar and elastic estates. To satisfy this need, the British built up a sorted out arrangement of transitory work movement from the Indian subcontinent.

On the work supply side of the condition, destitution among the South Asian lower class represented the chief motivation to leave the subcontinent. In 1834, Britain started sending out reinforced Indian work to Mauritius. The Dutch and French imitated the British framework and furthermore sent out Indian laborers to their states. In only 10 years, this little scope relocation turned into a mass development to give modest work to British and other European settlements. Outright neediness in numerous pieces of India, and with the possibility of picking up riches abroad, spurred Indians to sell themselves and become fortified workers.

The conditions on these excursions were amazingly troublesome. Mortality was high on British, Dutch, and French pontoons from the sub-landmass to these provinces;

the paces of mortality were very little better than on the slave owner vessels, that carried dark Africans to the ranches of the Southern United States.

The post-colonial era

After the second world war, the whole international migration process by affecting every migrant country and India was not far behind, during this period migration was directed towards developed countries, and the migrants were for the most part talented professional skilled laborers, skilled laborers, and entrepreneurs from the peripheral colonial and underdeveloped countries besides Anglo-Indians the post-war migration was totally different from the earlier countries such as the USA, united kingdom, Canada, Australia, and new Zealand .in what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls brain drain.

Recent migration to West Asia

The migration of Indian staff to the Gulf inflated once the oil boom of the Seventies. The numbers grew steadily because the Gulf economies have swollen exponentially within the decades to follow. The Gulf initiated its policy of tantalizing foreign staff owing to tiny low native men. Gulf countries were significantly fascinated by recruiting a lot of laborers from the Asian nation and alternative South Asian countries because of South Asian workers' readiness to simply accept poorly compensated low competent jobs. The India-Gulf region is the second-largest migration passageway within the world. Of the nearly thirty-one million non-resident Indians (NRIs), a calculable eight.5 million are operating within the Gulf. Indians represent over a half-hour of the expatriate men within the Gulf States, wherever the proportion of non-nationals within the utilized population is among the best within the world.

1.2.2.Indian Diaspora History in the United States

Approximately 2.6 million Indian immigrants and their children (the first and second generations) live in the United States. The India-born population is the third-largest immigrant population in the United States and were enumerated as a component of the American ethnic mosaic, as 'Asian Indian', but historically it was not a significant country of settlement for Indian emigrants, and India was not a major source of immigrants for the United States. The Indian diaspora is a comparatively youthful populace it is a highly organized diaspora, and is represented by a count-less number of well-funded and professionally managed groups. Many members of the Indian diaspora have deep, positive, and multifaceted forms of engagement with India.

There are two significant surges of Indian relocation that happened in the Americas, the first started in the nineteenth century where foreigners from India originally showed up in the United States in little numbers principally as low-talented homestead workers who went to the Caribbean, Guyana, and Surinam. By 1910 they numbered around 1,000, and this was considered so disturbing that the 'Asiatic Exclusion League' and the 'American Association of Labour' marked them as a 'tide of turbans' and a 'particular danger'. Thus, Indian migration to the USA declined after 1910 until the annulment of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 set off another in flux of outsiders from the sub-mainland.

Until the 1970s, the United States was not a significant nation of goal for Indian displaced people, and Indians made up a meager portion of the United States' all out migrant populace Restrictive migration laws passed by the U.S. Congress during World War I and in the years promptly following successfully cut off Indian and other non-Northern and non-Western European populace inflows through the mid-1960s.⁸ The consequence of these broadly one-sided movement arrangements for India conceived

was that from 1920 through 1959, just 6,250 of them increased legal perpetual occupant (LPR) status in the United States.

By a wide margin, the greatest blast to expanding Asian Indian relocation to the United States was the entry of the US Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which rejected the old migration framework totally. This law supplanted the old standard framework set up during the 1920s dependent on racial and national characteristics preferring the Global South and Europeans over others, with a framework that offered inclination to foreigners with explicit, sought after aptitudes in the United States, just as the individuals who previously had relatives in the nation or who were escaping mistreatment. The section of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 opened up the opportunities for bigger scope migration from Asia.

This important legislation laid down the legal foundation for future immigration to the United States. The act was significant in two important ways: it abolished discrimination based on race and nation of origin for the purposes of admission and created three major categories—family reunification, professional skills, and refugee status. These reforms would remain the primary basis for immigration policy the next 25 years. The post-1965 immigration of Indians coming from India to America is identified by three classifications. The first group called the Early Movers (from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s) was highly educated, with over 45% of them having acquired professional degrees in medicine, engineering, and computer science (now called STEM fields). The second one is the rationing of the seats in higher education that created a high stake, an examination-based selection from within the already select group. Third, the US immigration system selected within this doubly selected group when it favored skills, especially skills in engineering and technology, as the basis for awarding employment and students. Ultimately, the majority of Asian Indians who

came to the United States after 1965, were triple selected, which benefitted both the immigrants who were trying to improve their lot in life and the United States who needed their technical expertise. This talent pool was comprised almost wholly of men from elite castes and classes, who were only too eager to escape from a country that could not offer them enough opportunity to apply their skills.

The greater part of settlers from India dwelled in five states: California (20%), New Jersey (11%), Texas (9%), and New York and Illinois (7% each). The metropolitan zones with the most Indian workers were the more noteworthy New York, Chicago, San Jose, and San Francisco Areas. These four metro territories were home to 33% of Indians in the United States.

The way that Asian Indians originate from such huge social and social assorted variety in India, with 33 significant dialects and approximately 1500 minor ones, seven significant religions including a mélange of six significant ethnic gatherings finding homogeneous gatherings in American has prompted a to a great extent heterogeneous presence in America. The nonattendance of homogeneity among Asian Indians is reflected in their resettlement and settlement designs in the United States as well as on the planet. By and large, the heterogeneity of Asian Indian culture and customs has forestalled the development of categorized Indian settlements and Indian towns in the United States.

I.2.3. Indian Diasporic Literature and Writers

There is a huge corpus of writing that is accessible on the subject of Indian diaspora contains books, sonnets, letters, travelogues, documentation, Anecdotes, letters, journals, books, combined with records of sociological research . Such an enormous corpus can be attributed to the broad nature and the wordy history of the Indian diaspora. The abstract commitments of the

Indian diasporic are a sign of their inquiry – search through recollections, look for “home”, scan for roots. The oeuvre epitomizes feelings, recollections, and interest. Writing's commitment with the wonder of Indian diaspora can be ordered into:

(a) The literature on the diaspora.

(b) The literature of/by the diaspora.

By all accounts, both of these literary genre deals with similar issues in which contemporary Indian authors such as Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Desai and Amitabh Ghosh used their pens to bear the imprint of a postcolonial current, where questions of identity, patriotism, history and thinking about colonial oppression, and the problem of individual identity, centered on the difficulty of living between tradition and modernity, and oscillating between the clash of cultures and external influences that strain the consciousness of the Indian author it also These works explain the longing of the diasporic individuals, the longing for “home”, and to follow one's “foundations”. All the more critically, it is the longing to comprehend the space that one involves. The diasporic author needs to as a rule comprehend this longing in her/his current setting, yet additionally take cognizance of the time that has passed since the principal individual from his family left as a settler. Despite the fact that every individual from the Indian diaspora has an alternate encounter, there are shared feelings that are activated by being in the diaspora: All diasporas are despondent, yet every diaspora is troubled in its own way. The sublimity of the Indian diaspora has produced a scholarly group that features the essentialness of this wonder. It talks about the torment of relocation, both physical and socio-mental, and

sentiment of fleeting quality and what makes the writing of the Indian diaspora so engaging is that Maybe the repeat of thoughts/words like “torment”, “love”, “blamelessness”, and “home”! As Iyer says, “it's not in every case simple to let one know from the other” (p,32). These works explain the longing of the diasporic individuals, the longing for 'home', and to follow one's “underlying foundations”. “Home” as Invoked in the Literature of/on Indian diaspora ... the 'referent' of 'home'... [Is] subjectively unique ... 'home' as an at the same time coasting and established signifier. It is a conjuring of accounts of 'the country'. In racialized or patriot talks, this signifier can turn into the premise of cases... that a gathering settled 'in' a spot is not really 'of' it. – Avtar Brah 'Home' produces an undeniable issue in the talk of the Indian diaspora. As Brah calls attention to, the word 'home' has a subjective meaning. Practically all the diasporic Indian scholars have featured some part of 'home' (3). In any case, regardless of the focal issue being the equivocalness over 'home', the worry raised by each diasporic author is unique. This is increasingly obvious when we take a gander at how it is seen over the fluctuated ages of diasporic authors. This variety is watched not just if there should be an occurrence of the diasporic Indian essayists, yet in addition in the view of 'home' among various ages of diasporic Indians.

II. Theories

II.1Dislocation

With the idea of diasporic home, People of the diaspora are laterally displaced, they experienced fluidity of identities, and they bear every day the agonies stemming from the unmanageable nostalgia of things left, places and

language abandoned, and though displacement helped to have developments in many fields to diasporic people as well as to the people in homeland it also creates immeasurable problems physically and psychologically such as assaults from the host community, identity crisis, cross- cultural conflicts, alienation, home, and host issues, the trauma of uprooting and re- rooting, etc.

II.2.1.What is Displacement and how it is Related to Diaspora Studies

Dislocation is a key idea and topic that we come across in post-colonial and current writing it intends to decipher the crisis of personality induced by imperialism or innovation. Colonized individuals had to surrender or dissociate from their countries, their first places, their societies, custom, and dialects while colonial relocation happens in view of politically roused and exploitive social assets.

Dislocation can be defined as a particular form of migration, in which individuals are forced to move against their will, where people are forced to move within their country of origin, which is referred to as an internal dislocation. Another definition is provided by the Cambridge dictionary dislocation is defined as: “The situation in which people are forced to leave the place where they normally live”. While the facts confirm that the possibility of uprooting is truly a build of post- colonial theory to decipher the writing made by black and Indian diasporas or by individuals who relocated to recently made nations .

The term designates any person who lives in a state of in-between-ness. He moves from the place of his origin or youth to another place. The

migration, exile, indenture, diaspora, displacement are forms of dislocation according to Edward Said who states that:

...in Representations of the Intellectual, the inside/outside location of intellectuals which might create their critical distance comes more easily—if that is quite the word—with the experience of displacement, migration, diaspora, or, in his favorite term, exile. These forms of dislocation, which result in intellectuals belonging fully neither to their culture of origin nor to the one in which they find themselves, are widely recognized as both formative and representative of the post colonial world”. (Ashcroft & amp; Husain, 49)

As dislocation is the direct opposite of location, it may occur in two ways: Voluntary and involuntary, while involuntary (forced) dislocation happens due to the natural calamities, political, social, religious turmoil and what not, voluntary displacement, moreover psychologically, takes place due to mainly aspiration for a better life, globalization, and its offshoots, as bummer mentioned :“ dislocation is the separation of people from their native culture either through physical dislocation (as refugees, immigrants, migrants, exile or expatriates) or the colonizing imposition of a foreign culture” (Bammer 11).

Nostalgic remembrance of motherland juxtaposes itself with a kind of inheritability of settlement in a new land, this kind of juxtaposition results on one side in an ambivalent or hybrid view of their guest communities and culture and on the other side.

II.2.Assimilation

Like conquest and enslavement, immigration is a transformative force, creating significant and unexpected social changes in both sending and receiving societies, it can be forcibly under military occupation or political and economic difficulties or by their own choice. In the context of reception, immigration is followed by varying degrees of acceptance, intolerance or xenophobia about the alien newcomers on the part of the natives, which can shape the immigrants' sense of belonging and facilitating the process of response, their integration in the host society may take a variety of forms, some leading to greater homogenization and solidarity, others to greater ethnic differentiation and heterogeneity. Those outcomes are shaped by the complex interaction which the immigrants are received by the society, and assimilation is one such possible outcome.

II.2.1. Assimilation as a Concept

In the literature on the cultural integration of immigrants, the perspective of assimilation theory has dominated much of the sociological thinking for most of the XXth century. This approach builds upon three central features. First, diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture through a natural process along which they have the same access to socio-economic opportunities as natives of the host country. Second, this process consists of the gradual disappearance of original cultural and behavioral patterns in favor of new ones. Third, once set in motion, the process moves inevitably and irreversibly toward complete assimilation. Hence, diverse immigrant groups are expected to "melt" into the mainstream culture through an inter-generational process of cultural, social, and economic integration. This view is exemplified by Gordon (1964), who provide a systematic

dissection of the concept, In Gordon's view, immigrants begin their adaptation to their new country through cultural assimilation, or acculturation, by which he meant the entry of members of an ethnic minority into primary group relationship with the majority group, though cultural assimilation is a necessary first step, ethnic groups may remain distinguished from one another because of spatial isolation and lack of contact. Their full assimilation depends ultimately on the degree to which these groups gain the acceptance of the dominant population.

Sociologically, at the group level, assimilation is the involvement of the absorption of one or more minority groups into the majority at the individual level, assimilation indicates accumulative changes that make individuals of one ethnic group more integrated and identified with the members of another.

Ideologically, the term used to justify selective state decreed policies aimed at the eradication of minority cultures H. G. Duncan defines assimilation as follows: "a process, for the most part conscious, by which individuals and groups come to have sentiments and attitudes similar to those held by other persons or groups in regard to a particular value at a given time" (Duncan 153).

According to Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, assimilation is one of the four major categories of social behavior, the others being conflict, competition, and accommodation, "Assimilation is a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and by sharing their experience and history are incorporated with them in a common life" (Park,Burgess 20).

The agents in this process are either persons or groups. The latter are defined more specifically as cultures by Young and as races by Simons. Park and Burgess' definition is sufficiently elastic to conceive of assimilation as taking place within an in-group. Thus, the term might refer to the socialization of the child. However, judging from the descriptive material offered, assimilation is meant to refer to interaction between members of two different national or cultural groups—usually the former.

II.2.2. Models and Levels of Assimilation

Many immigrants from different cultures have been integrated into societies around the world through the process of assimilation. Assimilation is their process to incorporate and share the social and cultural networks of the host society, it refers to the process of giving up one's culture and successfully taking on the characteristics of the country of residence society. Three models of assimilation have been used to illustrate and clarify the diversity in the United States, and they can be used in any other country around the world

•Conformity model

It based on cultural and biologic superiority of the English language and culture, it demanded the non-white people and immigrants to abandon their cultural heritage, religious and linguistic values, and adapt as much of the American culture so that they could gain the economic and political benefits of being American.

•Melting pot model

Is the process where the elements of culture brought by the immigrants are turned into a new American culture that mold different cultures blend together as one.

•Cultural pluralism model

It offered an alternative to the melting-pot model of 1990, in this model individual cultural identity is valued and accepted, groups choose to maintain their ethnic identities, cultural and social differences persist over time.

Whenever migration happened, it is accompanied by major changes, and determination or willingness of the immigrants to assume the culture of the host country, their integration or assimilation into the majority environment is a process that passed by some levels Cheng and butler (1993) describe six levels of assimilation and adaptation that affect culturally and linguistically diverse immigrants and they are as follows:

. Reaffirmation

The people do not accept the new culture and attempt to revive native cultural traditions; they safeguard their customary way by building communities and societies, churches and institutions that reflect their cultural values and language.

. Synthesization

People attempt to synthesize a selective combination from both cultures, through this selective assimilation, immigrants take from the new culture what they need to survive and keep their traditional culture and beliefs.

. Withdrawal

Immigrants may reject their native culture or the new culture because of cultural conflict, those people become isolated from the culture which they

reject, do not maintain relationships with its members and do not learn the language or culture of the host country if they chose their own culture.

.Constructive marginality

People tentatively accept both cultures but do not fully integrate into either one

. Biculturalism

Refers to the full involvement of both cultures, bicultural individuals accept and receive both cultures, and also speak fluently both languages and can switch between the cultures with relative ease.

. Compensatory adaptation

People reject and avoid anything related to their native culture and language, and they completely integrate into the new culture.

III.First and second-generation Diasporas(assimilation, dislocation, and third space)

III.1. dislocation

Focusing on migrant status directly highlights “ non-belonging “ and “ otherness “ in the context of ethnicity, with such terminology , second generation migrants differ from the first generation The term second generation is also rejected by members of second generation themselves , first , the term incorrectly equates citizens who fully identify themselves with the society in which they were born and in which they grew up with an undifferentiated group of migrants and with the ethno-cultural background of their parents Second , such a description completely ignores the internal differentiation of the category thus defined , I.e. differences in socio-economic status , education and other factors third , the most important

objection emphasizes the correlation of such labelling with the problem of dislocation and integration whereby the second generation migrants themselves do not see themselves as migrants differing from their immigrant parents , immigrant children lack meaningful connections to their old world , they are thus unlikely to consider a foreign country as a place to return to or as a point of reference , they instead are prone to evaluate themselves or to be evaluated by others by the standards of their new country (zhou , ‘Growing Up American: The Challenge Confronting Immigrant Children and Children of Immigrants’ Annual Review of Sociology 1997) The second generation diaspora do not feel the same as their parents toward their origin country , Jhumba lahiri captures this view as she announces: “ I’m very fond of Calcutta , I have been coming here since the age of two , I have been learning about the city where my parents were born and still have a vital connection with , it’s been a wonderful part of my life , but it is not home “ (interview Lavina Melwani , interpreting exile “ the Hindustan times April 23 2000)

Furthermore, the customs and traditions of first generation do not appeal the second generation, but the first generation very steadfastly holds on to these customs and practices which they have been observing and following since a tender age , they try to create an atmosphere in which continuity of traditions and values can be preserved as Chowdhury argues in her article – immigrants – create a close relationships with other immigrants and form a bond similar to the bond between extended family members in their home country , taking the Indian immigrants as an example , The children are initiated into the culture of their parents“ original land through the deliberate teaching of their own language, the traditions and the history of

India. Such measures are part of the “active socialization” which the parents undertake to foster the values of their land (Pyong Gap Min’s 31). These actions from the first generation immigrants draw us to the sentiments expressed by Paramjit S. Judge as he notes: “The old generation begins to perceive itself as the custodians of the social values and normative patterns, customs, and traditions. Conversely, the new generation considers these values and norms outdated” (Judge , “Punjabis in England: The Ad-Dharmi Experience” Economic and Political Weekly 2002) . This comment brings to the fact that while the first generation diaspora upholds the customs and traditions of their homeland, the second- generation diaspora does not give.

Much credence to these values and norms and generally appears to be more inclined towards the customs, traditions of their own homeland, America Language is also a serious issue and most first-generation diaspora would want their children to speak in their mother tongue at home. The first generation, we note, feels that a good way to maintain their identity is to know and to speak in the language of their homeland. Many parents, therefore, insist that their children enrol themselves in language classes and learn their own mother tongue, the first-generation immigrants feel themselves as outsiders in their host country. Their stay in the host country is motivated with survival tactics or for the sake of their children’s future prospects.

Therefore, it is a part of compulsion and temptation not the spiritual sense of belonging. Moreover, the alien culture and racial discrimination often remind them of their outsidership. Similarly, their prolonged absence from the native country creates a distance in their relationship with the

natives. They cannot feel the warmth and intimacy with the new generation. Besides, they are considered as outsiders from the native of their homeland.

III.2. Assimilation

While European countries are witnessing an especially vivid debate about immigrants' assimilation and integration into receiving societies, and with being a complex phenomenon, assimilation may be taking place along different dimensions and with different speed, and also differ across immigrants of various origins going to various destination countries we find that first-generation immigrants differ in a most important way from native-born along such dimensions as language, citizenship, civic involvement, religiosity, trust, perceived discrimination, occupation, and income, however, these differences are no longer the same for second-generation immigrants. The term 'second-generation immigrants' is actually a contradiction in itself. The concept of 'second generation' implies that they are descendants of persons who migrated, but do not themselves have a migration experience. Basically, the concept of 'generation' behind this terminology originates in Demography and Anthropology: it describes the vertical dimension in kinship- structures, i.e. The relational difference between parents and children (and grandparents/grandchildren, etc.) as a universally relevant social categorization in all cultures and societies.

The concept of second generation in the context of Migration Studies is to address the offspring of parents who migrated to the place where their children were then born and/or raised. For second-generation immigrants, we find strong relationship between processing citizenship and economic outcomes, language and perceived discrimination as well as between

perceived discrimination and trust , since the perceived discrimination reflects immigrants experiences with attitudes and behaviours of native-born in receiving societies , So segregations is lower towards the second generation than toward the first , in contrast assimilation is higher towards the second generation who are more likely to identify as “ typical Americans “ compared to the first Chowdhury states that the first generation were brought up with certain set of traditions and norms , which enable them to maintain in the us , whereas the second generation have greater social contact with the American society , and hence are hard to keep their own traditions The first-generation immigrants are rather resistant in assimilating with the host culture. Their “being” or their past obstructs their assimilation process. Bhabha explains that the past does remain passive. Rather, it is quite active and keeps on influencing the present. As a result, they are more nostalgic about native culture and resistance to the host culture. In other words, nostalgia, reminiscences, shared and common ancestry, sense of loss and cultural dislocation afflicts first-generation and result in cultural alienation. In fact, their “close bonding with their homeland and culture does not allow them to follow the new land’s culture completely” (Patel, T. Multiparadigmatic Studies of Culture). The second generation displays a different attitude to their host culture than their parents. The idea of homeland, root, nostalgia, and history is simply a matter of imagination for them. Such ideas cannot render attachment to the native country of their parents. Rather the host country and culture are a reality for them. Unlike their parents, they do not have any passionate past other than the host country to cherish. The host country and culture is their past and present. So they tend

to “aim at total assimilation, by breaking away from the roots and traditions” (Patel 6). However, their distinct socio- cultural upbringing influences their assimilation process.

The process of acculturation takes place very slowly only up to subsistence level in the first generation. Acculturation is the process of the adoption of a new culture and environment. It can be defined as the process of learning and incorporating the values, beliefs, language, customs, and mannerisms of the new country. The first generations of immigrants are often preoccupied in preserving their native culture. So their acculturation process limits only following the culture of the workplace, observing certain social conventions and festivals to keep connected with their own surroundings such as their own children. Besides, they are forced to adopt some aspects of the host country in order to maintain their life normally.

III.3. Hybridity and Third Space

Hybridity is an exceptionally key idea for this area of research because of the way that it makes a fascinating paradox: to fit in better with the host culture, migrants are relied upon to coordinate into the new culture and capacity inside it, along these lines they are required to shape a hybridized character that joins components from their home culture with components from the host culture, in any case, this hybridization at that point places them into an underestimated position inside the host just as the home culture, in light of the fact that as a half breed creatures they don't adjust to the social standards of either culture.

hybridity theory has been attributed to Homi Bhabha , a post-colonial and literary theorist who challenged the dynamics of socio-political power

and culture through discourse analysis , his most prominent contributions to cultural discourse have been the concept of hybridity and third space Bhabha has developed his concept of hybridity from literary and cultural theory to describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and iniquity , for Bhabha hybridity is the process by which the colonial governing identity undertakes to translate the identity of the colonized (the other) within a singular universal framework , but then fails producing something familiar but new. Hybridity signified the productivity of colonial power and shifted in fixities (Bhabha 6).

Bhabha described hybridity as, the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity efforts. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power ,colonial hybridization served as the reified articulation of the ambivalent space in which the rite of power intersected the site of desirous ownership, rendering the objects simultaneously ‘disseminatory’ and disciplinary (Bhabha 159-160). This ambivalence directly challenged the validity of authority.

By purposefully reframing the effects of colonial power as the production of hybridization and not of the blustery command of colonialist authority or the silencing of Indigenous traditions, a shift in power and a new, powerful perspective was created (Bhabha 159). Thus, within this rich, fertile metaphorical space—‘beyond’ binary colonial paradigm—a space rife with

innovation and innovation by way of redefining and re-scripting both the historic and present cultures—is an ‘in-between’ space in which multiplicities of hybrid cultural identities flourish.

Third Space has not been conceptually confined as simply engendering possibilities but, instead, it has been viewed as an active space in which constant production occurred. It was assiduously ‘interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative’ in creating “new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation” (Bhabha 1-2). Therefore, Third Space was a metaphorical space, without a fixed location, and was produced in and through discursive conditions. The concept of the third space is submitted as useful for analysing the enunciation, transgression and subversion of dualistic categories going beyond the realm of colonial binary thinking and oppositional positioning. (Law) Despite the exposure of the third space to contradictions and ambiguities, it provides a spatial politics of inclusion rather than exclusion that “initiates new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation.”(Bhabha 1). The hybrid identity is positioned within this third space, as ‘lubricant’ (Papastergiadis 56) in the conjunction of cultures , their ability to transverse both cultures and to translate, negotiate and mediate affinity and difference within a dynamic of exchange and inclusion. They have encoded within them a counterhegemonic agency. At the point at which the coloniser presents a normalising, hegemonic practice, the hybrid strategy opens up a third space of/for rearticulation of negotiation and meaning. (Bhabha qtd in Meredith 2). Hybridity is an exceptionally huge thought for this region of exploration because of the way that it makes a fascinating paradox: so as to fit in better

with the host culture ,migrants are relied upon to coordinate into the new culture and capacity inside it , along these lines they are required to shape a hybridized character that joins components from their home culture with components from the host culture , in any case ,this hybridization at that point places them into an underestimated position inside the host just as the home culture , in light of the fact that as a half breed creatures they adjust to the social standards of either culture .

Conclusion

The notion of diaspora is not new and the formation of diaspora communities can be found ever since the instances of the transnational migrations came into existence the word diaspora is being used to connote the various experiences associated with the dispersion and the displacement of communities on account of immigration to different countries of the world.

The term has provided a model which the modern cultural theorists and critics such as : Edward said ; Gayatri spivak ; homi bhabha and vijay michra have eagerly adopted for developing a conceptual scheme to analyze inter-cultural and transcultural process and forms Homi bhabha celebrates the diasporic aspect of identity by propounding concepts like third space and hybridity , Diasporics are in an constant flux owing to the complexities of life that they are surrounded with based on the broad spectrum of the global history of Indian diaspora, it is clear that to define its diaspora or any other diaspora for that matter is not merely a linguistic or physical task but one needs to include metaphoric, psychological, cultural and range of other parameters into consideration. Owing to the contradiction inherent in the

diasporic discourse, the complexity of diaspora experience is intensified all the more.

Post-Colonial writers attempt to reassign new ethnic and cultural meanings to marginalised group , Post-Colonial literature attempts to construct new identities against these outwardly imposed borders. It is not a literature of victimhood, but rather an assertion of power, a reclaiming of experience , readers hear both cries of loss and proclamations of birth , The new culture that emerges is a hybrid that is neither pale mimicry of its conquerors, nor a complete return to the past.

Diasporic discourse is marked by its supposed complexities and ambivalences arising, out of the conflict between localities and spatial duplexes. The concept of identity for the diasporas is precariously bound within an episteme of displacement and the sense of exile. And a zone not defined by ethnicity and nations

Chapter Two:

Alienation and Assimilation Diasporic Conflicts in First and Second Generation Immigrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* .

Introduction

There is no doubt that diaspora and what it carries from complexities such as dislocation, assimilation and other problems related to the cultural identity and its hybridization because of migration and distant from roots a huge theme that used and discussed by critics and authors since it reflects authentic experiences of immigrants in alien lands the namesake is a contemporary diasporic story that tells the story about the assimilation of an Indian Bengali family from Calcutta, the Ganguli, into America, over thirty years (from 1968- 2000) the cultural conflict experienced by them and their American born children which creates a very big cultural gap even though they are from the same land in different ways, the spatial, cultural and emotional dislocation suffered by them in their effort to settle “home” in the new land. Like many “professional Indians” who “in the waves of the early sixty’s”, “went to the United States, as part of the brain drain” (Spivak 61). Therefore, this section discusses both of the alienation and the flow of assimilation experienced by the family, alongside with the hybridization that the second generation immigrants fall in because of managing the two different cultures these elements are analyzed upon and through previous studies of many scholars and theorists

I. Identity in Relation to the Title “The Namesake”

Significance in the maintenance of a good family name. Personal names are so important. They define in large part who we are, how we are perceived, or even how we perceive ourselves. Our name is our identity and a window on our way of life and self. The first, direct answer to the question:

“Who are you?” is our name. Certainly then, the importance of the name cannot be denied. Since names have cultural connotations, they denote the cultural identity of people and become as dear to individuals as their culture itself.

Jumbha Lahiri’s debut novel *The Namesake* (2003) shows the theme of cultural alienation and loss of identity that the immigrant faces while building a new home on foreign land. The novel depicts the characters who’re culturally, socially, and psychologically alienated. They are cut off from their roots and ethnicity. The cultural estrangement, as summarised by modern sociologist Melvin Seeman, dominates their social behavior and they are oppressed, pushed aside, ignored, and treated poorly on foreign land. They feel estranged and isolated by the people of the other country. The title itself reveals the existential trauma of the culturally displaced character, Gogol. The title augurs the issue of identity crisis in a host culture. The namesake is all around the metaphor of a name which is the most integral part of an individual’s identity, As its title suggests, at its core, *The Namesake* tackles the question of forming one’s own identity, and explores the power that a name can carry. The protagonist’s cultural identity begins to blur together with his naming ceremony, thus, pushing him into a limbo he struggles all his life to liberate himself from.

Naming, and nicknames, are also an image of the bonds shared by different characters throughout the novel, and they carry weight as markers of those bonds. When Ashoke and Ashima go back to Calcutta on family vacations, they come to be “Mithu” and “Monu,” and are converted into more confident versions of themselves. Sonia calls Gogol “Goggles,” Maxine

is “Max” to Gogol—whom she is aware of as Nikhil—and to Dimitri, Moushumi is known as “Mouse.” This abundance of names is additionally a sign of the diverse worlds that the main characters of Lahiri’s novel inhabit simultaneously—often in a way that causes internal division, however which can also offer a form of comfort.

Ashoke Ganguli seems that he wants to help his son discover a way in which to coexist with the complexity of identity. To begin with, following Bengali custom, he tries to give him two identities, one identity, his *daknam* or pet name, who he’s to the people who have known and cherished him all his life, and a different name, his *bhalonam*, his good name, who he’s to the outside world. This will embed in him the knowledge that he is at least two people, who he’s to his family members and the people who care about him, and who he’s to strangers. Perhaps he also wishes to convey the idea that identity is multiple and many-faceted like reality. It is not one thing or another, but simultaneity, as his own life has been.

But the good name Ashoke later chooses, Nikhil, the five-year-old Gogol, and his school reject; then the eighteen-year-old Gogol didn’t accept the name Gogol and becomes his good name, Nikhil, Ashoke has given his son two names, two identities, however, Gogol should find their meaning for himself within the country and also the time in which he has been born. And along with his acceptance and rejection of his two names, he starts a pattern of first accepting and then rejecting outer identities that seem decreed on him by others and which he’s seems unable to distinguish from his essential self. He seems to think he should be one thing or another, Bengali or American, instead of accepting ambiguity and multiplicity. The name Gogol means very

different and various things to Gogol and Ashoke. To Ashoke, the name Gogol is, first of all, a reminder of the way in which the reading of Gogol's short story saved his life, how it was his dropping off the page from the story which alerted rescuers that he was still alive after the train wreck and made them stop and pull him out of the wreckage where he would otherwise have perished. It's a rebirth of himself in a different form, as a person who desires to leave India and travel to other places, to build an identity for himself different from the one created by his life in India. And so, in a way, is the birth of his son.

However, Gogol is also a connection to his own family, to his grandfather who told him to read the Russian realists, and whom he is going to see at the time of the train accident. There is an identity here that transcends culture, as generations of Indians (ultimately, Gogol Ganguli becomes the fourth) find a sense of life's essence in an English translation of Russian work. But to Gogol Ganguli, Gogol is simply an odd name that he has been saddled accidentally. It makes it totally different. (And it probably does not help that when pronounced correctly, the name sounds like the English word Gogol) Once he's in high school and supposed to study Gogol's story in English class, he refuses to read it.

For Gogol, his name is his being and one does not compromise with one's being. Torn between a good name and a pet name Gogol's life becomes an endless pursuit, an unending search for a name that could be him, that could change him authentically and that he could establish with.

For Gogol, his name becomes directly his nemesis and his redemption. As long as he strives to run off from his cultural identity, it remains his

nemesis however once he realizes its inevitability, it brings redemption. Talking to Alden Mudge in the course of a telephonic interview Lahiri explains: I realized that it was important and inevitable for him to accept his name per se. It is more about what we inherit from our parents---certain ideas, certain values, certain genes---the whole complex set of things that everyone gets from their parents and the way that no matter how much we create our own lives and choose what we want out of life, it's very difficult to escape our origins (28).

The problem of identity cannot be taken lightly as it is not a simple name-game that Gogol is trapped in. In the final acceptance of his original name, Gogol also accepts his trans-cultural reality----for once emerging out of the ABCD² shadow and becoming himself instead. An English professor's comments may also shed some light on the novel's place in the discourse of diaspora: "Lahiri's *The Namesake* is a novel of catachresis, at once an American immigrant story and an intriguing contribution to a growing postcolonial canon" (26). Jhumpa Lahiri explores this pet name/real name as a part of discovering her own identity. She confessed in an interview with Charlie Rose, that Jhumpa is actually her pet name. Nikhil alias Gogol's story is then, a coming-to-terms story of a generation that rejects the location between two nations/cultures.

II. Cultural Conflict and Lack of Belongings

II.1.The Unhomely Home Ashima

² "American-Born Confused Desi" ("ABCD") is a term used to refer to South Asian Americans born or raised in the United States, in contrast to those who were born overseas and later settled in the USA

Ashima is a complex character who has a one of a kind relationship with the certified and the imagined space of diaspora; her dislocation from Calcutta to the United States is specialized by the contention between her Bengali culture and the socio_spatial state of the spot of settlement, there were mixed feelings worked for Ashima where Ashima's removal from India to America is not just a topographical disengagement but a socio-cultural and mental one.

She was spiritually and emotionally dislocated from the comfortable “home” of her father most of the time she remains lost in memory, of her home, that after her big traditional arranged marriage with ashoke she fled to America where there was winter and the neighbourhood is covered with snow, the lack of colours contrast sharply with the rich colours of the previous wedding scene, thus creating an atmosphere of dislocation , “change of geographical location is the first shock” an assertion that is that underlined by the fact that Ashima feels physically unwell in their apartment due to New York winter that make her freezing in her thin Indian dress rendering the traditional item in clothing out of place in the new geographical space.

Thus, in her way to America, she brought Bengali magazines, articles and poems with her; and spend all the time in kitchen making Indian foods and snacks to reduce a little of her homesickness; but it was not enough.

Ashima did not complain about her dislocation to Ashoke or her parents and tried to keep in touch with her close family in India by writing letters, and awaits any news from her homeland. “Letters arrive from her parents, from her husband’s parents, from aunts and uncles and cousins and friends (...)” (Lahiri 36). By keeping all her emotional hazards and

disappointment to herself and not intending to worry her parents in her letters, she presented a good picture of the domestic facilities and cleanliness.

Ashima suffers a lot and felt more displaced when she passed by her pregnancy period thus that period for her was full of loneliness and pain, unlike in India warmed homely care is given to the pregnant women, with family members swarming has around to give even more intense protection to them and for such a unique moment, a woman is permitted to go to her parent's home, because it gives her more comfort and she finds more strength. Thus, the idea of home is actually related to comfort, which Ashima is not experiencing, and for her "motherhood in a foreign land. So far from home, unmonitored and unobserved by those she loved, had made it more miraculous still. However, she is terrified to bring a child up in a nation where she is identified with nobody, where she knows nothing, where life appears to be so tentative and spare. She misses her preferred Indian food during her pregnancy. She nostalgically attempts to make up for it all alone: "Ashima has been consuming this concoction throughout her pregnancy, a humble approximation of the snack sold for pennies on Calcutta sidewalks and on railway platforms throughout India, spilling from newspaper cones" (Lahiri 1).

However, her sensation of being in the hospital vanished from her head when she saw their Bengali friends who came to see the baby. Moreover, by the time they while there living in Cambridge the made a lot of Bengali friends who were all from Bengal.

Ashima's another aspect of dislocation was when they celebrated Gogol's annaprasan³ where Ashima said that there is no baptism to the baby but there is an annaprasan ritual, which has a huge meaning and value in India that is declared in novel: "For being a foreigner, Ashima is beginning to realize, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy - a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling of sorts...Like pregnancy, being a foreigner, Ashima believes, is something that elicits the same curiosity from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect" (Lahiri 49).

Moreover, this was followed by the growth of Gogol and his studying in the kindergarten while Ashima returns to be alone and depressed that she did not use to be alone but this takes no much time when a group of Bengali friends moved to where they live but this was not enough to Ashima to make her forget that she is displaced from India so that she reads the letters received from her parents every year and cries in each time. Ashima is living a sort of isolation alone at the age of 48 years old in a stage that her husband, son, and daughter said "Everyone should live alone at some point" but Ashima is older to learn this, in which her children are far from her and could not celebrate Thanksgiving with her and she found the independence of her children and their settlement in other cities and have a space between them a thing that she will never understand since she was deprived of her parents' company when she moved to America.

Ashima's character has lived in five houses in her entire life the initial one is in her folks 'house then her parents in law house in Calcutta. Then moving to America,

³ Annaprashana Is a Hindu ritual (Saṃskāra) that marks an infant's first intake of food other than milk. The term annaprashan literally means "food feeding" or "eating of food".

to the house they leased in Cambridge, after that the personnel home in Pemberton.

Lahiri referenced this as: "One hand, five homes. A lifetime in a clenched hand" (Lahiri 167).

After her husband's death, she decides to live six months in America for six months in India that she had now new homes that were difficult for her to leave. In addition, from now on she will live in every place with no limited place she decides to live between her roots and her family she lived 30 years missing India but now she will miss America. In somehow she creates a bridge between the two worlds, that according to Rita Joshi it was, "an attempt to merge Old and New Worlds".

II.2. Rootlessness Moushumi

In sharp differentiation to Ashima is one whose outcast is maybe never settled: Gogol's ex Moushumi; a Bengali young lady, conceived in London and brought to America at a youthful age, aching for Paris, not settling in New York, not happily wedded to a Bengali and adoring the Russian Dimitri. Moushumi is the 'twice uprooted' transient kid.

Moushumi is that complex character which has a diversity of identities origins thus she rejects her group of three of Bengali, British and American characters to grasp a fourth – a European one. However, from a socio-cultural viewpoint, such a French character can be understood as a rebellious impact dependent on her unique Bengali personality. Like Russia, France applied a striking social and ideological impact.

On the postcolonial Bengali mind. It could likewise be interpreted as an upper-white collar class British adoration for as far as anyone knows more refined French culture. Like Ashima, she also dismisses the USA as a 'host' nation. The account brings

up the issue of which is Moushumi's 'nation of origin' – England, France, or India. As Brah watches "'home" is a mythic spot of want in the diasporic creative mind' and Moushumi's creative mind gives off an impression of being still looking for that mythic, impeccable home where she can stop her wanderings and 'have a place.' Within the lives of Ashima and Moushumi and the account structure itself, the issue of home is an essential one. Moushumi and Ashima both have consistent, borderless presences.

Salman Rushdie's observation is that migrant's straddle two cultures... fall between two stools and they suffer 'a triple disruption' comprising the loss of roots the linguistic and the social dislocation.

Moushumi's mentality of not adhering to any one culture or nation shows how the subsequent age is going Global and are getting multicultural. They are likewise investigating new personalities through "transnational contingencies of routes" (Gilroy 250).

She is never over-determined on what establishes her basic identity. This absence of accentuation on part of Ashima is astutely utilized by the creator as a foil for Moushumi's over-accentuation on her French personality; her refusal to be taken as a traveler in Paris is likewise a dismissal of America as represented by Graham, who had dismissed her. In dismissing America, she additionally dismisses her folks' decisions for her. It is a dismissal particularly of the Bengali-American character of her mother; a woman who 'cannot drive after thirty-two years abroad' (Lahiri 247).

III. Assimilation and Adaptability to Western Culture

III.1. Encountering (Dis) Assimilation

The procedure of Assimilation for Ashima, within the alien land, was strained rather than purposeful, she is that sort of persons who creates an

environment within which continuity of traditions and values are often preserved as Chowdhury argues in her article, “Immigrants produce shut relationships with different immigrants and kind of bond just like the bond between relative’s members in their home country”. Whereas she neither appreciated nor accepted the Yankee manner of life. Within the inside of the Western culture, Ashima wears a sari⁴ , puts a bindi ⁵ on her forehead, cooks Bengali dishes to a large degree, her life is consumed by recreating Indian culture in America, like immigrants of other communication, Ashima and Ashoke to make their circle of Bengali acquaintance. They all become friends only for the reason that “they all come from Calcutta” . Robert Cohen rightly remarks: “A member’s adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history” (Cohen 9).

There was a kind of conflict in Ashima and Ashok in the host country’s culture, where they could not accept to name their son without consulting their senior member in the family due to their Indian culture, Ashoke and Ashima consult elder members of their community to make any important decision as what Lahiri mentioned in the novel ,“Each step, each acquisition, no matter how small, involves deliberation, consultation with Bengali friends” (Lahiri 64). But they were forced to follow the country rules and regulations. In which it creates a kind of forced assimilation to the two characters. Also, she refused to stay in America and raise her child according to the Bengali way of life.

⁴ The sari (Hindi: साड़ी), a long piece of cloth, is a traditional garment worn by millions of women in South Asia (mainly in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in Pakistan, and Iran.)

⁵ A bindi (Hindi: बिंदी) meaning "point, drop, dot or small particle") is a colored dot worn on the center of the forehead, originally by Hindus and Jains from the Indian subcontinent.

Both of Ashima and ashoke were forced to assimilation here for the sake of their children since they realize that they cannot force their children to follow their way of living thus they learned the American lifestyle by knowing how to cook and season the turkey with garlic, cinnamon, and red pepper, also how to paint the eggs in pink and purple in thanksgiving, and put a wreath of flowers on their door in December and putting a wool scarf for the snowman despite the fact that the American traditions and customs were hard to learn for their parents as Lahiri writes in the novel:“And yet it was for him {Gogol}, for Sonia, that his parents had gone to the trouble of learning these customs” (Lahiri 286).

Ashima now invites her children’s American peers on the feast and finds it “less stressful” to feed forty Bengali guests “than the task of feeding a handful of American children” (Lahiri 72). Ashima begins accepting the American methods of living however, the Indianness in her is kept unblemished by clinging to the Indian culture and customs it appears when she refused Gogol’s romantic relationships with American girls and his residence in in Maxine’s family house. Thus she wants him to marry a girl from their Bengali folk.

After her husband’s _ashoke_ is dead, Ashima starts to melt gradually in the American flow by start making a bond with American friends and getting a job in American library unlike her first days in America which marks her as a typical Indian house wife who just does the house duties.

III.2.Defiance of the Native Culture

Moushumi is one of the central characters in The Namesake who encounters existentialist topics of freedom and freewill, forswearing of

regular qualities, and a mission for realness. She is always the rebellious cultural outsider, appears almost curious to experience the settled feeling of a culturally accepted marital discourse.

She is an Indian in roots, British by birth, American by migration and French by education so she carries the traits of other cultures to America, on top of her Indian heritage. Thus, this fact makes Moushumi herself an immigrant, and Friedman thinks “Her insecurities and feelings of alienation stem from this fact” (Friedman 123).

Although she is born in the West and educated in British, American, or French schools, she cannot escape the destiny awaiting every Indian woman. Which she knows that is marriage in which in her childhood and adolescents experienced some events that make her hate her Indian culture and look for an escape for herself because when she was only five years old, her relatives ask her whether she will wear a yellow or a red sari for her wedding (Lahiri 213). And when she was only an adolescent, people come to her parents’ house to ask for her hand in marriage or her grandmother shows Moushumi the jewelry she will be given when she gets married. All these things make her vow never to marry a Bengali man (Lahiri 213). And also her knowledge of that she is getting a good education and her parents support in her education is just for a better match to an educated man, in which Sonia Ladha inspects the situations of the second era of migrant ladies from India to the U.S. furthermore, infers that there are various purposes for a family's uphold for the education of the womenfolk. Because of what she calls, “The philosophy of patrilocality”, their education is urged either to improve them as wives and moms or to fulfil the demand to provide educated wives for the

educated men. Consequently, she attempts to flee from her folks, quite far. Nonetheless, this fleeing is not really a physical Therefore; it is also a cultural or social escape. Thus, she studies something completely different at university alongside with chemistry (French language) dismissing her family's desires, "Immersing herself in a third language, a third culture, had been her refuge-she approached French, unlike things American or Indian, without guilt, or misgiving, or expectation of any kind. It was easier to turn her back on the two countries that could claim her in favor of one that had no claim whatsoever"(Lahiri 214).

Her decision of subject at college really stacks another culture on her hybrid life . Which clarifies that moushumi doesn't generally have a place with any culture specifically, making her as it were 'homeless', recommending 'an absence of more profound association' in Dalton-Brown's words. She does not see this 'lack' as negative, on the contrary claims that it provides a "state of potential freedom" . Moushumi creates this state of freedom for herself consciously. She is a "global migrant" that she is "not content to assimilate to any cultural norm" Moushumi's education in French is her ticket for her amazing venture. She moves to Paris, away from both of the way of life that guarantee her, to inundate herself in another one. In any case, it is preposterous to expect to eradicate the hints of things she denies. Subsequently, Moushumi makes her own 'Third Space', as Bhabha calls it, complementing her 'hybridity'. Her real want is to be "a genuine cosmopolite" and at the end of the novel we discover her dismissing her family any network esteems and American pluralism for European urbanity, exile and expatriate life.

She is that kind of character who does not want to be embraced by her Bengali rituals and rules that is in her definition kills her freedom unlike other cultures she experienced so by being away from parents and Indian influence moushumi founds her self-freedom in which she completely breaks all the Bengali traditions and way of life by learning how to dress fashionably, to tempt men who can treat her to a lavish lifestyle and pamper her with attention and offerings., become sexually licentious due to having relations outside marriage in which the Bengali society refuse for both genders Living in this manner she is befriended by Graham, who proposes to her. Thus, she creates what is called a hybrid world for herself making her a true hybrid embodying three continents.

Her parents had given their consent to her plans, feeling relieved that she is getting married at last _which is what Indian parents always desire and expect of their children_. However, unfortunately, this all went down because of that huge cultural gap that graham experienced through his relationship with moushumi in which he could not assimilate with moushumi Indian way of life during trips to Calcutta he finds the Bengali customs and culture “taxing” and “repressed” as there were no drinks and he couldn’t “even hold her hand on the street without attracting snares”(Lahiri 217).

Therefore, he decides to break with Moushumi just a week before their marriage in which Lahiri in this novel additionally presents that it is not just the Indian travelers who feel disjoined in different nations and face social issues, the outsiders from any societies situations, the settlers from any culture feel the equivalent in the other; “predominant societies”.

After Moushumi's wedding which was ruined at the last moment, she listened to her parents who refused her to marry an American person by getting an arranged marriage in which she said no to before they arranged a marriage a meeting for her with Gogol _ that she met before in his fourteenth birthday_ which she describes as a "courtship in a fishbowl" (Lahiri 250). Soon after, they start to meet and have a sex relation multiple times which ends up by a big Indian wedding that was at first a good going marriage between them but soon after Moushumi was feeling suffocated since she was tied up in that marriage with Gogol which is something she is not used to that what she explains to Gogol by not wanting a child.

Moushumi builds a world for herself in which she can enjoy her freedom and her triple cultures and identities (Bengali, American, British in addition to French) which none of these she really belongs to but she rejecting some and acquiring the other one, this world for her is a liberal world that cannot behold which she experience suffocation that forces her to cheat on Gogol and turn back to her previous relationships with men's when she met Dimitri who was her ex-boyfriend in the days of her freedom in France. That she felt with him free and limitless.

When she is with her lover Dimitri, she can translate her identity into one of anonymity. His apartment where they meet and conduct their illicit affair makes her feel further 'inaccessible, anonymous' away from defining and creating herself as either American or Bengali. A relationship with Dimitri, "Small, balding, unemployed, middle-aged"(Lahiri 264). She is: "Most concerned with not being swallowed up by the identity of being a

married woman, which she associates with her mother's helplessness and dependency"(Caesare 116).

The feeling of independence is necessary for her and for this reason "Along with the Sanskrit vows she'd repeated at her wedding, she'd privately vowed that she'd never grow fully dependent on her husband. . . ." (Lahiri 247). Moushumi is a mix of French, American and Indian.. She doesn't need anything to do with Indianness and her husband reminds her of the very life she had opposed, had battled so powerfully to abandon she really envisions herself with somebody extraordinary, other than Gogol, "She tells him that for most of her life he was exactly the sort of person she had sought to avoid" (Lahiri 212). Friedman sees in Moushumi that: "In her self- fashioning, an Indian mate is something that would reaffirm her identity as an Indian American, not as an international cosmopolite" and her marriage to Gogol ".conflicts with her own expectations" (122).

Moushumi's betrayal to Gogol with a white man, Dimitri, marks the end of their relationship and marriage. The presence of a white man as the rescuer of Moushumi from her bound marriage helps to remember what Gayatri Spivak distinguishes as the natural account structure whereby the white man safeguards the brown lady from the stifling and inflexible desires for the brown man Moushumi's fascination in white men can be viewed as a methods for social insubordination. At the point when she leaves Gogol, who speaks to all that she detests, she winds up with a white man, the image of what Spivak calls "the rescuer of brown woman" . Moushumi's leaving of Gogol appears as her freedom from social commitments. All these données show Moushumi's in betweenness. Nonetheless, she does not worry about her

hybridity as a concern however, it is something that permits her to extend and satisfy herself. Her “third space” gives her more space to move about and be a one of a kind identity.

Purkayastha’s further analyses are also highly relevant in the context of Lahiri’s narrative in helping the reader locate and understand Moushumi’s conflicted and tense relationship with the narrow and highly structured boundaries of her upbringing. Purkayastha’s contention is that ‘immigrants and their children try to integrate by following the educational, occupational, residential patterns of the white middle class’ as one of the many routes to integration and that ‘transnational literature, in many ways, has started to document this process.’ It is a method of integration that Moushumi has adopted and then renegotiated halfway through her journey as a ‘twice displaced migrant’. Embracing a Francophile identity, Moushumi, in search of a new home, negates both the Bengali and American sections of her identity.

IV. The in-Betweenness of Life as an Indian American

IV.1. Gogol ambivalence through his namesake

Jhumpa Lahiri comments:

The question of identity is always a difficult one, but especially so for those who are culturally displaced, as immigrants are, or those who grow up in two worlds simultaneously, as is the case for their children. The older I get, the more aware I am that I have somehow inherited a sense of exile from my parents, even though, in many ways, superficial ones, largely I am so much more American than they are. In fact, it is still very hard to think of myself as an American. For immigrants, the

challenges of exile, the loneliness, the constant sense of alienation, the knowledge of and longing for a lost world, are more explicit and distressing than for their children. On the other hand, the problem for the children of immigrants, those with strong ties to their country of origin, is that they feel neither one thing nor the other. The feeling that there was no single place to which I fully belonged bothered me growing up. It bothers me less now. (Web)

As identity becomes the core issue, names become quite significant, the expressive function of a name varies from culture to another. Bengali children are given two names, a pet name which is for family and close friends and the other is a good name which is for the rest of the society. This very feeling of dual identity has been very well portrayed in the character of Gogol, a son of two Bengali immigrant couples. At birth Gogol is given a pet name as his official name sent in a letter from his great grandmother in India, got lost in the mail and the grandmother died, his parents give him the surname of the Russian writer Gogol as first name in Massachusetts where he is born. The name is chosen with the understanding that it is merely a formality, however Ashoke and Ashima have to think seriously about Gogol's good name. Upon entering kindergarten, Gogol is told by his family that he is to be called Nikhil, but he hates the name and wants to be called Gogol by society as well as his family, this decision made on the first day of kindergarten causes him years of distress as it was also his first attempt to reject the dual identity. As a child he does not question who he is, but when he grows up, his name did not relate him to either the Indian community nor the American, people around him keep asking questions about his name and he

is tired to explain , he spends his teenage and young adult years trying to discover his identity , he wants a name that is linked to Indian or American identity As stated in the statement below:

For by now, he's come to hate questions pertaining to his name, hates having constantly to explain. He hates to tell people that it does not mean anything "in Indian". He hates having to wear a nametag on his sweater at Model United Nation Day at school. He even hates signing his name is both absurd and obscure, that it has nothing to do with who he is, that is neither Indian nor American but of all things Russian.
(Lahiri 75-76)

Therefore, in this situation , Gogol experiences the ambivalence in his life , this condition is asserted by young that ambivalence is a term in psychoanalysis which describes a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite toward object , person or action (Young 161) he struggles with a name he is embarrassed by and a heritage he is not sure of either , his identity as Gogol the namesake of Nikolai Gogol , the Russian storyteller , looms over a longer period of his life and creating a divided self which cannot reconcile with his past , present or future , drifting like a rudderless boat from one shore to another without realizing its true self Gogol is a hyphenated character living between two totally different cultures Prior to his departure for college , Gogol officially changes his name to Nikhil , this was a symbolic to his self-conscious trying to completely disown his real self and attempts to metamorphose himself to a different person.

IV.2.Cultural assimilation (Gogol's character)

The first generation's life is about adaptation and acquiring new things about themselves while the second-generation people find it as an aspect of the conflict between the two cultures. Parents are always trying to maintain ties with their home country and also try to instill their cultures and heritage in the life of their children. The children are enthralled by their fellow friends in the host country, which is no longer their own country at all.

In the novel the namesake, each character struggles to balance the Western and Indian cultures and values. As the parents succeed in creating such balance by managing cultural hybridity, it seems more difficult for their children to appreciate their native culture and roots.

Gogol, the protagonist, who is a typical second-generation immigrant, having been named after a Russian writer in memory of a catastrophe years turns out to the reader as a hybridized identity.

Ashima and Ashoke make peace with their past, but their son Gogol attempts to eradicate his heritage, this becomes evident when Lahiri describes how Gogol resent childhood trips to India during which he is forced to interact with family and give up materials comforts of American life.

He always takes India not as his homeland but as a country the way other Americans view it to be, he wants to be seen as American, free of expectations of a foreign land, Gogol grows up to find such loyalty to a homeland they have never known or lived in absolutely ridiculous, for Gogol India is a primitive setting.

As a teenager, Gogol's trips to Calcutta with his family are disappointing, when they meet their relatives he does not feel close to them as his parents do. "Soon, American meals and fast food which Gogol desires

badly are replaced by “plates of syrupy, spongy rossogollas⁶” (Lahiri 82) for which he has no appetite but which he dutifully eats, he also realizes that he must adjust to a less civilized accommodation at the Ganguli house in India, the mere thought of the lack of privacy is terrifying for Gogol, he is never compassionate about the place where his roots lie, he never feels that he belongs there, ironically speaking, Gogol is a foreigner in India in which he is physically and psychologically alienated.

He welcomes the symbols of the dominant foreign culture while complaining about Hindu rituals that his parents are kept to practice.

He also refuses to be called ABCD (American born confused Desh) because the term suggests marginality, which Gogol never feels in America, he refuses to be a victim of the label, which implies a confusion regarding identity, on the contrary, Gogol feels he is the exotic alien in Desh (India), here Lahiri raises the question of what is one’s homeland: is it the place where one is born, brought up and lives ! or is it the place where his roots lie! Though this question is to the core of the characters’ personal and cultural conflicts, the novel leaves the question unanswered, Gogol is the novel central character, he imitates the language, the dress and cultural attitudes of Western society where he was born and raised. He rejects his native roots and intentionally suppresses his own cultural identity.

At a certain point, Gogol becomes obsessed with particular codes associated with Western values such as independence and personal freedom. When he graduates from college, he lives in a separate apartment. He is engaged in different romantic relationships with different women, He is

⁶ Spongy rosogolla is a traditional dessert from Odisha and Bengal, consisting of balls of unripe cheese or curd (chenna), covered with a sweet syrup.

fascinated with the free and pleasurable lifestyle of Maxine, his American Girlfriend He spends his Christmas holiday with Maxine. Her parents warmly welcome Him Gogol realizes the difference between his parents and Maxine's parents' lifestyle. When they receive Gogol for the first time, the Ratliff's are not formal with him. They serve him small dishes, and Lydia, Maxine's mother, pays no attention to Gogol's plate. Gogol knows that his mother would never serve a few dishes to a guest. When Ashima receives Maxine for the first time, she offers her flavored pink lassi⁷ , samosas⁸ , and then a big heavy lunch. Gogol's parents remain silent during the meal because, in India, one should not talk while eating. On the other hand, Gogol enjoys dinner parties with the Ratliff's because they are loud and lively. The tables are candlelit, and wine is served. He likes their intelligent talks and the elegance of the whole atmosphere. “ Maxine's parents are the center of attraction in these dinner parties while Ashima and Ashoke behaved like caterers in their own home (Lahiri 35).

Gogol desires his girlfriend's free life. Maxine deepens his sense of independent maturity away from his native culture and Indian values, which he believes to be restricting. And just to fit into the American society, he not only adopted their culture but also started hating his own name, Gogol was helplessly carrying his ambiguous name which was the root of all problems.

At home he was forced to follow the Bengali traditional name, which in the outside of his home and among the American he was not accepted with

⁷ Pink lassi, is a popular traditional dahi (yogurt)-based drink that originated in India it is a blend of yoghurt, water, spices and sometimes fruit.

⁸ Samosa is a donut native to Central Asia and has become a popular delicacy in the Indian. triangular in shape, it is made from a thin wheat paste that coats a stuffing traditionally made with vegetables or meat, chili peppers and spices, including coriander and turmeric.

his name, at the same time Gogol had also no intense and lovable feelings about India and their cultures, what he did show the love for India was only to satisfy his parents at high school, choosing to become “Nikhil”, nevertheless, the new Indian name “Nikhil” which he rejected as a child, does not deepen the admiration of his native identity, it does not make him more attached to his Indian roots, ironically, Nikhil is his passport to entre a more liberal world, the name Gogol is the real obstacle to a free life far away from the restrictions of his parents ‘ conservative world, after that he deliberately distances himself from his parents, seeking an American lifestyle, As a mature man, no one in Nikhil’s world is called Gogol. Thus, he never tells Maxine the story of becoming Nikhil after long years of being Gogol He fears being rejected by American society, which he is eager to join and blend with Nikhil ignores the Indian identity of the name as he behaves as pure American. On the other hand, this renaming process does not help him to reinvent himself fully, to break from that mismatched name (Lahiri 287). He thought it would correct the “randomness” and the “error” (287) of his earlier name, but it does not.

IV.3. Diasporic Consciousness (Adjusting with Both Cultures)

Eventually, Gogol reunites with his family after his father’s death. As he reads Akaky Gogol’s book, which his father gave him as a birthday gift years ago, Nikhil finds the Gogol inside himself. He is ready to read the book he [has] once forsaken, has abandoned until now (Lahiri 290). Not only has he salvaged the book as his father was pulled from a crushed train forty years ago (291), but he has also saved Gogol he takes one more step towards recognition of an authentic identity after years of assimilation into Western

culture and denial of his Indian roots. Losing his father, Gogol is more aware of his duties as an Indian son. Now his admiration of American life is enfeebled. The bond between him and Maxine becomes weak.

Therefore, he goes through a resistance of the relationship, rejection, and finally, redefinition of his native cultural identity. Now, he does not want to get away from his family. “Immediately after the funeral, he tells Maxine in a decisive tone, I do not want to get away” (Lahiri 186). When Maxine realizes Gogol’s rejection of her presence among his mourning family, she decides to remove herself from his life. On the other hand, Gogol becomes aware of the fact that relationships are transitory and temporary and that the only stable and permanent relationship is the one he enjoys with his family. After spending years, maintaining distance from his family, his origins, Gogol now values their love and, more important, he does not hate his name anymore. On the contrary, he fears to miss the name as he is losing the loved ones who have always known him as Gogol without people in the world to call him Gogol, no matter how long he himself lives “Gogol Ganguli will, once for all, vanish from the lips of the loved ones, and so, cease to exist” (Lahiri 289).

That thought provides him no sense of victory and no solace. The day when Gogol found out his father’s death, was also the moment he wholly accepted his India. The events that followed were showing how Gogol practically became an Indian. He began to do Indian rituals and customs upon his own will. First, “He shaved his head in the wake of his father’s death, because it was the duty of Bengali’s son” (Lahiri 179). Another ritual was

eating a mourner's diet⁹ , in which Gogol, along with his mother and sister, should only eat plain rice, dal, and vegetables (180) .

Although he was in a mourning state, Gogol still aware with the fact that he lived in America, therefore, he quickly returned to his previous life and continued maintaining his India as well as American sides. He kept shifting between two identities, depending on whom or where he was. As stated by Du Bois that men might learn of a future than the past (59), Gogol becomes more considerate with his mother's perspectives. He started to be the obedient child as to how Indian kids supposed to be.

The following details of the novel show that Gogol redefines his identity outside Maxine's shadow. When he identifies with his native heritage, Gogol identifies with a Bengali wife. He becomes aware of himself as an Indian, his father's son. The closing scene of the novel is impressive in its emphasis on Gogol's admirable epiphany. "He is ready to join his parents friends in the crowded party, to take photographs of the people in his parents' life, in this house to eat as well, seated cross-legged on the floor, and speak to his parents friends, about his new job, about New York, about his mother..." (Lahiri 291).

Leaning back against the headboard and adjusting a pillow behind his back, Gogol is ready to start reading his father's legacy. Finally, Gogol manages to resolve the tension between his conflicting identities and creates a deeper understanding of Indian-American identity. By recognizing his Indian-ness, Gogol does not denounce his Western culture fully. Though he

⁹ mourner's diet it is a traditional ritual that Indian members should follow when there is a funeral in the house that it allows them to eat only rice and vegetables, along with the chapatti bread for weeks.

eventually embraces his native culture, he realizes he is not a Bengali only. He has been affected mentally and subconsciously by his Western world (his schoolmates, university colleagues, and work associates). As he redefines what it means to be a descendent of a Bengali family within a white-dominant society, Gogol incorporates his native culture into the American culture. Now he realizes that the values of the two cultures have enriched his life. He is genuinely a symbolic embodiment of the new hybrid generation. Asha Choubey (2013) suggests that “Gogol, an Indian-American, lives like a pendulum till he finally attains maturity to self-realization” (4).

Thus, he ends his conflict. The moment he allows the two cultures to overlap in one cultural contact Zone “After spent years maintaining distance from his origins, yet all his detachment toward his family would eventually draw him back to them; to the quiet, stubbornly exotic family” (Lahiri 281).

Furthermore, “Gogol considered Ashima, his mother, as his “home”” (Lahiri 284) after his marriage failure, where he previously claimed that home was his apartment. In this statement, his mother symbolized India, whereas his apartment symbolized America. Additionally, there was another episode that strengthened Gogol’s Indianness, besides the death of his father. It was the time when Ashima decided to leave the States and return to India to spend the rest of her life, that Gogol could comprehend how important his mother was to support his living in America. “He realized, by all means, he was the one to introduce Indian tradition to new generations, and yet it was for him that his parents had undergo to learn American customs; Thanksgiving and Christmas, even if the celebration was not really meant to be (286).

Finally, Gogol allows the two cultural spaces to create a hybrid subject. He accepts the new signs of his hybrid identity because such identity is, as Bhabha (1994) suggests in *The Location of Culture*, is productive and innovative (1). Peterson and Rutherford (2003) suggest that the search for one's roots can be positive or may lead to narrow nationalism, which results in prejudices, hideous biases, leading to implacable animism (188). Lahiri shows how Gogol finds his third space and realizes that his search for his Indian roots is a positive force. To this end, Gogol could not escape his name, that he would forever be remained as "Gogol" instead of "Nikhil". His name, Gogol, had been defining and distressing him for years; unable to reinvent himself and break from the mismatched name "Gogol". Nonetheless, those events had formed Gogol, shaped and determined who he was, in which he should prevail and endure in the end (Lahiri 287).

The novel closes with Gogol refusing to invest in a single (American) identity. He is now part of two cultural horizons as he brings the two different spaces of American culture and Indian heritage in one-third space. Eventually, Gogol realizes the reality of him being an Indian born in America.

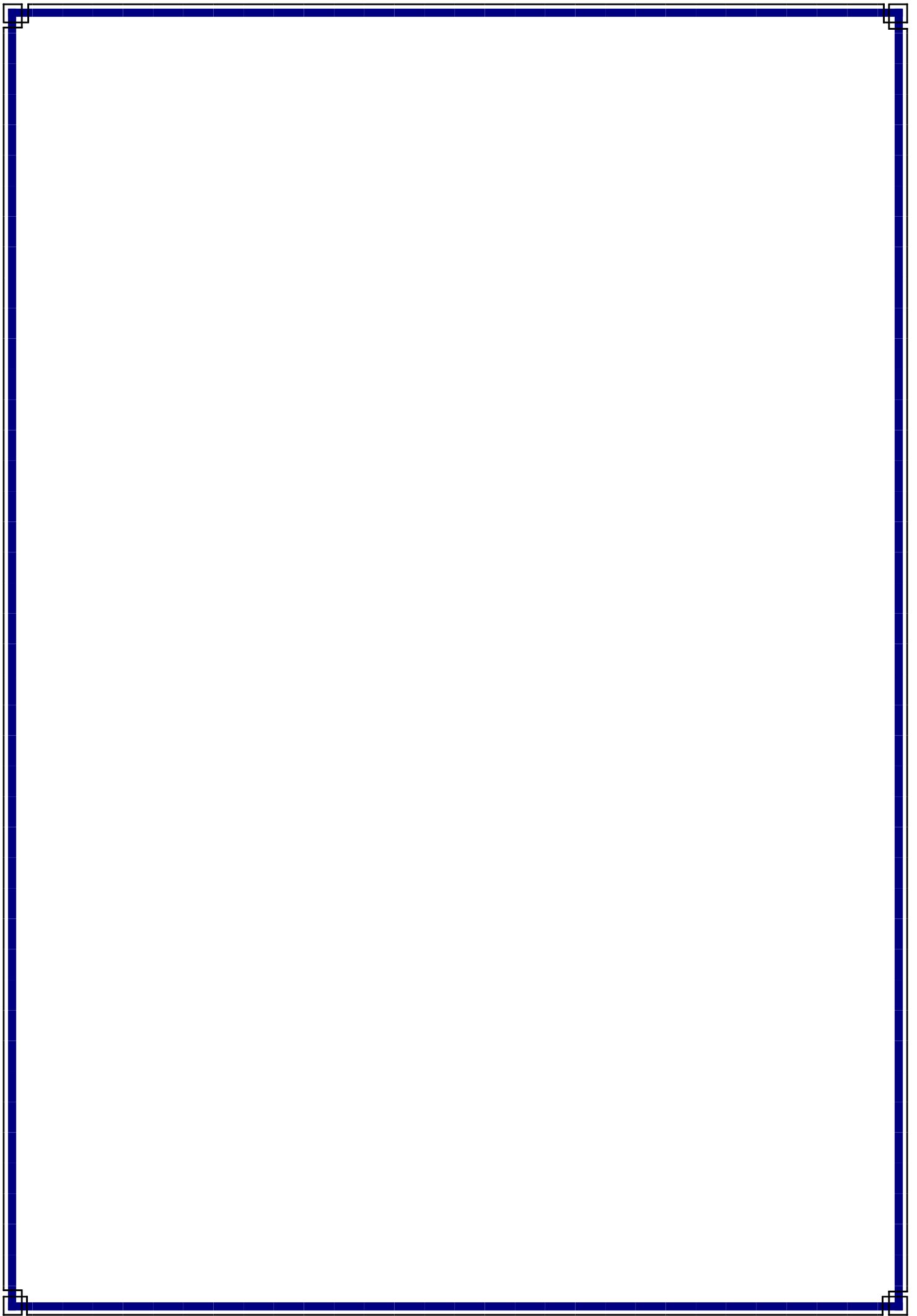
Conclusion

The Diasporas condition of living here and belonging elsewhere refers to unhomeliness, Jhumba Lahiri sense of remoteness and expatriation during her childhood is well portrayed by her in her immigrant fiction *The Namesake* in which the Indian immigrants and ABCDs in the United States can easily feel the loss of communication, inability to feel accepted, and complicated social status.

The characters that migrated practiced various stresses that influenced their realistic well-being, the Ganguli children realize that neither they are American nor Indians, Gogol cannot erase his past, so he accepts his name and his parents' home, likewise, he cannot disregard the present American home in which he was born, that's why his responsibility between them remains confused. In the same way, after the death of Ashoke, the American dream looms in Ashima's eyes and she wants her children to exploit the situation and derive the maximum benefits from this dreamland, so in spite of returning back to India, she decides to spend six months in India and six months in the United States, so as an Indian diaspora she is neither responsible for Indian home nor American home, she is a resident of nowhere. In short, the residents of nowhere or the diasporas are always in transit, they live in the tragic nowhere and consciousness like Lahiri represents the characters in the namesake.

The encounter/confrontation between the desire for assimilation in the free American world and the need for ethnic identity lead to Diasporas in the space of nowhere.

General Conclusion



Diaspora and dislocation have been widely recognized in the field of literature, many writers and authors adopt this genre in order to depict homeliness, cultural displacement, the bitter experience in the host country and to recount the mourning stories. Diasporic narratives tend to illustrate the huge cultural gaps and home nostalgia as well as to present the thought and feelings of the immigrants, in other words, these narratives are considered as sociocultural techniques in which cultural memories and experiences are shared, such kind of literature is mostly used to portray the conflicts and problems in the ambiance of the new culture, it tends to swing between locations and dislocation of different cultures wherein individuals often relive their memories, these writers crown themselves on the throne of the boundary of two countries.

Creating various cultural theories Hence, this study sheds light on Indians immigrants in the United States depicted by Jhumba Lahiri.

Jhumba Lahiri's *Namesake* is one of the best examples of the diasporic literature, Jhumpa writes to show that the United States is not an easy society to melt in especially for Indians; she wants to reveal the facts of an Indian immigrant who traveled to the United States and find themselves in a strange and entirely different cultural and ideological ambiance. In the *Namesake*, the ambitious writer uses her pen to unveil the Immigrants world, so this research is based on discussing and analyzing the main events and issues that Lahiri has presented in this book.

The first chapter is about the social, historical context in which Lahiri wrote the *Namesake*, the chapter examined the field that all immigrant writer

is in it which is diaspora and to be more specifically the Indian diaspora that Lahiri belongs, The second chapter analyzed the novel from different dimensions, it firstly provided multiple understanding of the concept of identity in relation to the title of the novel the namesake, since the person's name, is always regarded as an important thing because it defines a large part of who we are, thus Lahiri wanted to clarify what it means through the novel events, then it studied the socio-cultural dimensions in which the characters were analyzed, focusing more on the protagonist Gogol and his mother, the character Ashima Ganguli was analyzed as an individual since she suffers from dislocation plus the difficulty to melt in the American society whereas Gogol struggles to be Indian by origin American by birth, also what he passed through because of his name that is to indicate how he tends at the end to adjust both cultures.

Throughout this research, the main concern was to show the sense of living in exile, the sense of belonging to nowhere dealing with the themes of alienation, identities, and assimilation.

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الملخص

في روايتها السمي صورت الكاتبة الامريكية ذات الأصول الهندية جمبا لاهيري معاناة عائلة غانغولي المنتقلة من الهند الى الولايات المتحدة الامريكية حيث حاولت لاهيري تمثيل رحلة عائلة غانغولي في الولايات المتحدة الامريكية في سياق شتاتي وكنوع من الانخلاع وصعوبة الذوبان في مجتمع غريب وجديد هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لتحليل الرواية ولتغطية الاحداث الرئيسية التي جرت حول عائلة غانغولي في الولايات المتحدة الامريكية

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تقديم زاوية رؤية في ان المهاجرين الهنود قد أدمجوا ثقافتهم الأصلية مع ثقافة البلد المضيف مكونين بما يعرف بالتهجين وانفصالهم عن كلا الثقافتين لتكوين المكان الثالث

كما تتعامل هذه الدراسة مع القضايا الثقافية والاجتماعية للشخصيات في الرواية عن طريق اجراء تحليل عميق لتغطية الفجوات والابعاد الثقافية إضافة الى ذلك تقوم الدراسة بتقديم الكتاب عن طريق وصف جميع الجوانب التي عرضتها لاهيري وهذا يتطلب دراسة خلفية اجتماعية عن معنى الشتات وبالأخص الشتات الهندي في الولايات المتحدة الامريكية كما يستكشف هذا البحث معنى الانخلاع والاستيعاب الثقافي من اجل إعطاء تحليل شامل حول التجارب الفردية والجماعية للشخصيات

الهدف النهائي من هاته الدراسة هو كشف عرض الروائية لاهيري من وراء كتابة رواية كهذه ولتسليط الضوء على كفاء كل من نظريتي الانخلاع والاستيعاب الثقافي كأداة تحليلية لتحليل الشخصيات علاوة على ذلك لسرد نتائج البحث ومشاركتها من اجل الحصول على تقدير أفضل للرواية.