



## Efforts for identity and diaspora in novels of Jhumpa Lahiri: A socio- literary perspective

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### Abstract

Jhumpa Lahiri is an Indian born Canadian/American novelist, has made a deep impression on the literary canvas. The novel of Jhumpa Lahiri depicts the issues of her own cultural in west Bengal in India. This is an article arguing the predicament of name and sense of identity and belonging of the character of the Indian origin and immigrant in the USA in "The Namesake" (2003) the novel written by Jhumpa Lahiri. "The Namesake" composes it the best kind of ready references to segregate Diaspora as the term 'Diaspora' and its role in the present era, the life of first and second generation immigrants and their effort for identity and belonging are well expressive through the plot and character. The fact that Jhumpa Lahiri is the child of Indian immigrants when she migrates from England (when she was born) to America makes her both an emigrant and a Diaspora writer. She has written many novels on the Indian disparity of the theory of identity and culture difference in the space of Diaspora in her works.

**Keywords:** diaspora, identity, multiculturalism, origin, transnational

### Introduction

Words like "Identity" and "Diaspora" need no initiation in a postcolonial literary scenario. Indian Diaspora, today has come up with the multiplicity of histories, variety of culture, tradition and a deep instinct for survival," Indian Diaspora, though counting more than 20 million members worldwide survives in between "home of origin" and "world of adoption". The action of endurance of the Diaspora stone age has been resulted into advanced technology world age in exploration of a better life. Individual community in between the "home of origin" and world of adoption in the voyage mortician in the whole action from "alienation" to "assimilation"

As we know since inception man has always struggle and tried for a better life in this world of chaotic. This quest has always imposed man to move from one place to another, often leaning his homeland such movement have turned into kinds of exile or dislocation from the homeland was severe and painful the world "Diaspora" has adverse meaning but if it is a self-exile, then the very word becomes contradictory. There are different flavor of an exile. A colonist lower than that of an émigré he is higher than an expatriate a colonist is someone who deliberately leaves his native country to settle permanently in another country. Émigré is an emigrant, the one forced to leave to live his native country for political reason. A refugee is a person who has fled from some danger or political persecution some immigrant writer reflect. On one hand, their attachment to their motherland and on the other hand efforts of Identity in the novel of Jhumpa Lahiri "The Namesake". The present paper is an attempt to explore and second-generation immigrants. It also focuses on universal dehumanization in the modern globalized world. Jhumpa Lahiri, one of the second-generation immigrants in the USA, acknowledges as one of the women writers in Indian English Literature for her Indian themes is a recent new wave literary artist. She is the author of two acclaimed books, *The Interpreter of Maladies*. Her debut collection of short stories and a novel, *The Namesake*

she has received many awards and among them the most prestigious Pulitzer prize for fiction. Born in 1967 in London she was raised in Rhode Island her latest collection of short stories is *Unaccustomed Earth*, in which she handled personal problems. The social conflicts and cultural problems are with great depth at the beginning of "The Namesake". The issue of identity is presented. Culture of naming the baby is every society. Lahiri narrates the practice with bicultural implication with a style that leaves nothing untold. In "The Namesake", Lahiri's experiences of growing up as a child of immigrants resemble that of her protagonist. Gogol Ganguly regards self in the text versus the self as text in *Asian-American Autobiographies*. Rocio G. Davis says. "Asian American autobiographic generally highlighted the protagonist's growing comprehension of the meaning of value that society place on question and attitude about ethnic difference. Historical reconstruction and the place of their communities in American societies" (Davis, 2005) in "The Namesake", she reflects on the Indian Diaspora and creates a narrative that reveals the inconsistency of the concept of identity and culture difference in the space of Diaspora. In an interview Lahiri has admitted: "I'm lucky that I'm between two worlds... I don't really know what a distinct south Asian identity means. I don't think about that when I write, I just try to bring a person to life" and that is exactly what she does through her character. Names are symbols of identity in life. Names help people to communicate with each other, they play an important role for people to identify themselves. As identity becomes the core issue. The name becomes quite significant. India tradition follows various kinds of rituals and ceremonies of naming of born baby. Names play a very important role in life. In literature, dealing with the clash of culture, countries, and races, names emerge as identifying symbols. In Indian perfection good names represent dignified and enlightened qualities. Pet names are sometimes meaningless and silly. The title *Namesake* reflects the struggle Gogol Ganguly goes through to identify with his

unusual name. The novel represents the experience of very specific community which has no name. The novel center around the couple and community of Bengali origin in the USA migrated for various reasons. Sociologically, they are first and their children second generation south Asian immigrants or south Asian American. Narrating the story of Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli, Lahiri focuses on the cultural dislocations of a family. The Immigrant of Calcutta who came to settle in Boston to study work and raised a family. The novel moves quietly, eloquently across its central are from the birth of a son to the death of a father.

### **Effort of Identity in Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake**

The present paper is an attempt to explore the traumatic experiences and culture perplexity of the first and second generation immigrants. It also focuses on universal dehumanization in the modern globalize world. Jhumpa Lahiri's, one of the second-generation immigrants in the USA, acknowledge as one of the women writer in Indian English Literature for her Indian. Theme is a recent new wave nearly artist she is the author of two acclaimed books, "Interpreter of Maladies", her great collections of short stories and a novel, "The Namesake". She has received many awards and among them the most prestigious Pulitzer prize for fiction. Born in 1967 in London, she was raised in Rhode Island Her latest collection of short stories is *Unaccustomed Earth*, in which she handled personal problem, social conflicts and culture dilemmas with great depth. At the beginning of "The Namesake", the issue of identity is presented culture of naming the baby is a practice in every society Lahiri narrates this practice bicultural implication with a style that leaves nothing untold. He captures best the essence of the lives of Bengali Indian in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America. However Lahiri's (2008) [3] *The Namesake* is such a wonderfully apt description of a Bengali Indian family that it does not give her American nationally away and she is now acclaimed away. She is now acclaimed as the chronicles of the Bengali immigrants experience she describe how Ashoke abhors waste, even the extra water in a teapot a common Indian middle-class mindset the Gangulis are show taking precaution for everything that can go wrong, a constant fear of disaster as another typical Indian preoccupation. At the same time, she takes care to describe the second generation Indian immigrants the children who do not care for se off and coming home for every festival. Gogol and Moushumi do not wish to keep up the appearance of their marriage and Sonia decide to marry Ben a non-Bengali, non-Indian man who Ashima ultimately trust will give more happiness to her daughter than Maushumi ever did to her son. This is because rooting and re rooting the lives of individual leaves they devastated barrenness result due to of fertilized like love. Emotional feelings of care, bonding close relationship and intimacy among individuals. The different in social station widen the gap between husband and wife. Lives decay instead of flourishing in the new, adopted soil. From generation together the rotes lay deep in the worn-out soil, spoiling, rotting the young buds in the name of modernity and globalization longing or and belonging to a different homeland creates a void which cannot be filed with any other nation. It is like living the inherited for adopting temporary, notorious, glamorous future. The homeland is a pious place of worship in the Diaspora immigrants Nostalgia for homeland, feeling of rootless, instability,

insecurity and isolation causes intense grief, as reclaiming the past is impossible Bicultural life entraps the immigrants on a dilemma the couple are unable to acclimatize completely into the foreign culture and society. The intermingling of the eastern and western ethics lives stability is the essentially of the culture transmission and culture crisis, a part and parcel of their routine. Adopting the tradition of the native land and trying to learn new culture. In "The Namesake", Lahiri's experiences of growing up as a child of immigrants resemble that of her protagonist, Gogol Ganguly. Regarding the self in the text versus the self as text Asian-American Autobiographies, Rocio G. Davis says. "Asian American Autobiographies generally highlight the protagonist's growing comprehension of the meaning or value that society place on question and attitude about ethnic differences. The historical reconstruction and place their communities in American societies" (Davis, 2005). In the *Namesake*, she reflects on the Indian Diaspora and creates a narrative that reveals the inconsistency of the concept of identity and culture difference in the space of Diaspora. In an interview Lahiri has admitted: "I'm lucky that I'm between two words... I don't really know what a district south Asian identity means I don't think about that when I write, I just try to bring a person to life". And that is exactly what she does through her character. Names are symbols of identity on life. Name help people to communication with each other, they play an important role for people to identify themselves. As identity becomes the core issue, the names become quite significant. Indian tradition follows various kinds of rituals and ceremonies of naming a born baby. Names play very important role in life. In literature dealing with the clash of cultures, countries, and races, names emerge as identity symbols. In Indian perception good names represent dignified and enlightened qualities. Pet names are sometimes meaningless and silly. The title "The Namesake" reflects the struggle Gogol Ganguly goes through to identity with his unusual name. The novel represents the experience of a very specific community which has no name. The novel center around the couple and community of Bengali origin in the USA migrated for various reasons. Sociologically, they are first and their children second generation south Asian immigrants or south Asian American. The narration of the story is Ashoke and Ashima Ganguly, Lahiri focuses on the culture dislocations of a family, immigrants from Calcutta who settle on Boston to study, work and raise a family. The novel moves quietly, eloquently across its central are from the birth of a son to be the death of a father.

### **Conclusion**

Multiculturalism suggest the co-existence of a number of different culture it does not prescribe homogenization and conformity directly. It also does not encourage openly different ethnic religious, lingual or racial constituents of a particular society to degrade each other so that such a society is damaged or destroyed permanently. "The Namesake" is a perfect reference for Lahiri's story about the strangeness of the Indian immigrants experience in the United States and that is somewhat true also because the child of immigrants begins in a kind of nowhere place. Gogol or even Lahiri's family of America but not quite an American in part because they are not recognized as such by other. Gogol desires to blend in the American society he wants to live unnoticed but he is not viewed as an American

by other American. Even though he is a native born citizen he tries to put a wall between his past and his present but it is not easy. The adoption of Nikhil is a part of live only in the present. But the ghost of Gogol clings to him that sings his old name unconsciously. He does not respond immediately when he is addressed as Nikhil he tries to become an entirely different person from what really he is. Gogol struggles to carry the burden of two names. Nikhil resembles American names, yet 'Gogol' and his past follow him everywhere he experiences a feeling of being in between. Jhumpa Lahiri tries to focus on the issue of identity. What she has faced in her childhood the problem of Gogol's name symbolizes the problem of his identity. He wants to be connected to the stranger names in the graveyard when the students were taken to the graveyard for the project. He wants to relate himself with American locale but his name hinders his way to be recognized as an American. Nikhil replaces Gogol when he enters Yale as a freshman. Here nobody knows his earlier name. He feels relief and confidence. No one knows him as Gogol but Nikhil. His life with his new name also gets changed. Gogol is an outsider in American society whereas he does not feel intimacy with Indians. So 'who he is' becomes a great problem which determines identity. Gogol is trying to get identity. Even after making all effort to erase his past his failure to assert his identity is seen in his relationship with a woman. He does not want Ruth or Maxine to meet his parents. Such efforts are made to escape his past identity and heritage.

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