

**Cultural Conflict and Diaspora: A Comparative Study on the basis of
Indian immigration and Identity Crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's
The Namesake and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss***

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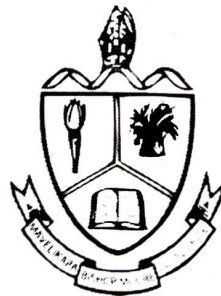
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**Cultural Conflict and Diaspora: A Comparative Study on the
basis of Indian immigration and Identity Crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's**

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Preface

The portrayal of the various issues generated by the experience of migrancy and Diasporas, such as displacement, alienation, rootlessness, fragmentation, racial Discrimination, marginalization, the crisis in identity, cultural confrontation, and many Others are largely portrayed in contemporary Indian writings in English. It is our humble endeavour to make a comparative study of cultural conflict and diaspora, based on Indian immigration and identity crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* and Kiran Desai's *The inheritance of loss*. Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai deal with the class and culture to which they belong, seem to confront the surge of a disciplined world where rootlessness and alienation. Both Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai attempt to capture reality in a prominent style.

The introductory chapter invites the attention of the readers to the portrayal of cultural conflict and diaspora in contemporary writings mainly in the works *The namesake* and *The Inheritance of Loss*, and also gives a brief introduction to the authors. The core chapter which is titled "Cultural Conflict and Diaspora: A Comparative Study on the basis of Indian immigration and Identity Crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*" for a comparative study addressing the themes of migration, ethnicity., culture, racism, homesickness, and identity crisis in both novels, regarding the backgrounds, setting, and phases of migration. The third chapter concludes our work with the finding that both the novels depict a realistic and touching picture of the perceptible life of the diasporas.

Introduction

Indian literature is one of the oldest and richest literature in the world.

Additionally, the oldest works of the Indian literature include oral transmission of knowledge. Their novels show multiple traditions, narratives which discuss about gender related problems, freedom of thought and expression, quest for dignity, quest for identity, problems faced by migration and displacement, cultural dislocation etc...

It is necessary to mention about women's literature as we focus on both Indian feminist writers, Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai. Women's literature in every language were viewed with a political history, tradition and social activism. In almost all the literatures of the world, the women writers are transcending the boundaries and making their presence felt on the international stage. Post-colonial women writers: new perspectives celebrate the excellence, originality and diversity in women's writings which is rapidly flourishing in the global market and creating waves.

Postcolonial writings should also be mentioned as there are so many postcolonial women writers who contributed their views. Postcolonial feminism emphasis location and cultural differences among women. It also asserts that women of colour are triply oppressed due to their race or ethnicity, class status and gender. Postcolonial feminism is concerned with the homogenization of cultural difference among women into a universal category. Toni Morrison, Chimamanda Adichie, Anita Desai, Namita Gokhale etc. are some of postcolonial women writers.

Kiran Desai, daughter of Anita Desai, is a young vibrant Indian English novelist with inherent artistic talent. She lived in India until age of fifteen, afterwards along with her family she moved to England and then to United States. She graduated from Bennington College in 1992 and received two M.F.A.'s. Desai lived a roaming life that took her from New York to Mexico and India. Her debut novel *Hullabaloo* in

The Guava Orchard (1998) artistically presents human foibles and eccentricities in a satirical tone. She published *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) and leaped into fame and won international acclaim by receiving the Booker Prize. *The Inheritance of Loss* was hailed by critics as a rich descriptive various loss which results in the certain feelings of frustration, isolation, alienation and so on. Desai's keen observations with judiciousness and feminine sensibility makes her apart from other writers.

Kiran Desai has explored the pain of an immigrant and the unfairness of a world in which the contemporary society treats one side travels to be a servant and the other side travels to be treated like a king. Desai captures the different cultures of India and depict it through the lifestyle of Indian in foreign land. What makes Desai's fiction fascinating is that the vast canvas of our contemporary society in which the themes of alienation, cultural clashes, displacement and exile are presented in the broad perspective of globalization. Diasporic fiction in English in the post-colonial period has not only been exciting and abundant, but also has undergone some fundamental transformation of theme and technique. The novelists of the period reflect and refract the multi-cultural ethos of India in their search for national and cultural identity. In this context, Desai's literary creations are endowed with multicultural themes in which hopes, aspirations of men and women in a globalized society are presented to comprehend the contemporary reality. Desai's novels reveal the subtleties and nuances of fictional art that contribute to her growth and development as a major influence on the Indian Diasporic literature.

One sparkling jewel on the fabric of Diaspora writing is Pulitzer winner Jhumpa Lahiri. She was born in London in 1967 for Bengali parents. Lahiri attended Barnard College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in English and later attained Master's degree in English, creative writing and comparative studies in literature and

the Arts as well as Ph.D. in renaissance studies. Lahiri has never been an Indian by citizenship. This attachment to a far-off land which is her parents' homeland makes her different from the other Indian writer. Writers like Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie have migrated to U.S.A. or some European countries, though they are not born or brought up or educated there. However, what all of them share is their first-hand experience with their native land, which is not the case with Jhumpa Lahiri. She was born, brought up and educated in London and Boston. Her connectivity with India and Indian people is borrowed from her grandparents, books and other NRI's. Jhumpa Lahiri has travelled extensively to India and has experienced the effects of colonialism as well as experienced the issues of the Diaspora as it exists. She feels strong ties to her parents' homeland as well as the United States and England. Lahiri published a number of short stories in magazines such as *The New Yorker*, *Harvard Review* and *Story Quarterly*. She introduced some of those stories in her famous novel *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) and she got Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000 and PEN Hemingway Award for Debut Fiction.

Jhumpa Lahiri is considered as one of the famous Indian American authors who are much admired chronicler of the Bengali immigrant experience. Her works portrays the migrant's experiences and their attachment to the homeland along with their urge to belong in the settled land for the betterment of the economic and social life. Jhumpa Lahiri is the child of Indian migrant and she thinks that the question of identity is always a difficult one for those who are culturally displaced and growing up in two worlds simultaneously. The condition of people living in diaspora is always a dual state which create confusion and clashes. Identity and sense of dislocation, alienation and other issues that expatriates deal with. Diaspora is all about the creation

of new identities in a new cultural space. Lahiri's works manifest the notion of being uprooted from homeland and also put emphasize on the quest for blending in the host country. Her characters try to become a "new-self" without really letting go of the "old-self" and thus creates stories that display universal appeal. Lahiri pursues contradictory ways in handling the issues of diasporic life which makes her writing a delicate and poised voice within the Indian and world diasporic literature.

The book *The Inheritance of Loss* takes place in a town called Kalimpong, which is near Darjeeling in the north-western part of India. It talks about the rigid class system that exist in India and abroad among Indians, and the struggles that the people face within the classes of the contemporary society after colonialism. The major theme running throughout the novel is the loss of identity. Sai, a seventeen-year-old girl living in mountains of Kalimpong along with Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge, a cook and a dog named Mutt. The retired judge Jemubhai hates all Indians including his father whom he breaks ties and wife who he abandons at his father's place after torturing her and is never accepted by the British in spite of his education and adopted mannerisms. Jemubhai is Sai's grandfather. Sai becomes an orphan when her parents died in an accident. She falls in love with her Math tutor Gyan, a Nepali, and he later withdraws Sai's love and fight for his motherland. The cook has hopes on his only son, Biju, who is an illegal immigrant trying to find works and a better life in America. Throughout the novel, there is no peace among the individuals and their lives are not fulfilled. Illegal immigration, unwanted existence, strange view of community etc. are discussed in this cultural alienation and loss of identity depicted in *The Interpreter of Maladies*. In the novel *The Namesake*, Lahiri tries to capture the experience and the cultural dilemmas of thirty years struggle of a fictional family, the Ganguli's for their integration and as novel.

Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* is a development of further themes of assimilation into alien culture. Gogol, the son of Indian born immigrant couple who came to create a new life in the University suburbs of Boston. The novel being with a date, 1968, to be precise, this takes the reader back in time to examine the tension between past and present. The parents Ashima and Ashoke, each born in Calcutta, immigrated to the United States as young adults. Their children, Gogol and Sonia, grow up in the United States and the novel examines the nuances involved without being caught between two conflicting cultures with their highly distinct religious, social and ideological differences. The novel uses Gogol's struggle over his name as a jumping off point to explore large issues of integration, assimilation and cultural identity. The name Gogol is taken from his father's obsession in reading Russian novels, especially the author Nikolai Gogol. The seeds of cultural dilemmas grown in Gogol. *The Namesake* examines only one phase of Indian migration to European countries, the professional Indians, who left in the early sixties. In the novel Ashoke Ganguli leaves Calcutta and reaches America in pursuit of higher studies to do research in the field of fiber optics. After staying two years in the U.S.A., he comes back to Calcutta and marries Ashima. The diaspora depicted in this novel shows that voluntary migration induced in them the feeling of the other in the host country mainly due to cultural disorientation. Jhumpa Lahiri has used food, clothing, language and rituals to explore culture diversification of Ashima and Ashoke. Cultural dilemma, sense of immigration, struggle for establishing individuality are some important aspects depicted in Lahiri's novel. Both these novels have an open ending and seeks for a solution.

Chapter 2

Cultural Conflict and Diaspora: A Comparative Study on the basis of Indian immigration and Identity Crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's

The Namesake and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

"So, here you are

Too foreign for home

Too foreign for here.

Never enough for both."

The idea of displacement has never been new to literature. Right from the time of Chaucer to the postmodern times, we can find incidences and instances based on the displacement of characters. Whether be Shakespeare's *The Tempest* or *Twelfth Night*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*, Charles Maturin's *Melmoth*, the wanderer, Hardy's *The Tess of the D'Urberville*, Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* or Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*- almost all of them illustrate the journey of the displaced protagonists. However, in these works there was always a possibility of return- a possibility which seems difficult in the novels of Diaspora. Initially identified with the migration of the Jews in all parts of the world, the term "diaspora" in postmodern times came to be associated with the displacement of any group of people. It is the "displacement" that forms a pivotal point in diasporic works. Displacement here becomes the source of attachment to past, memory, alienation, nostalgia and a hope to return back to the place of origin.

Post-colonial writing is a very rich, fascinating and ever-growing field of writing and one is gaining popularity in reading and studying. Nevertheless, the assessment of post-colonial literature requires a certain amount of contextual, cultural and critical work on the part of the reader. As a field, or subject area of literary study, postcolonial literature involves readers in finding out about historical and cultural contexts in order to be able to read postcolonial texts with some insight about why they were produced, how, where and to what ends, what they might be arguing, why they are exploring or arguing about those issues in those ways, and even the forms which the texts themselves take.

The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai is a great work of fiction, which communicates particular idea of history and cultural aspects. The novel mainly surrounds the themes of globalization, cultural conflicts, multiculturalism and quest for identity in the lost world. The characters of the story are normal human beings whose lives have taken a different shape due to the effect of forces like racism, colonization and globalization. It also shows the way of people crave or quest for their identity and when the opportunity is taken away from them, they take revolt and raise the question of 'being recognized' or 'being identified'. The fight of the minorities for their voice and identity is seen in the revolt of Gorkhas.

The story moves around the lives of Jemubhai and his granddaughter, Sai who lives with a cook. These are other figures like Gyan, Sai's Math tutor, Biju, the cook's son and some of their neighbours who negotiate the issues of identity. Each of them is shown to have left his/her homeland and settled at a different place which is totally alien. It is at these places where they have to prove themselves and gain a voice. Culture is set up as a non-organic, free-floating ambience that frees intellectuals and theorists from their solidarities to their regional modes of being. It is

within this transcendental space that postcolonial is actively cultivated as the cutting edge of cultural theory.

In the novel *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri, she carefully orchestrates a sequence of recurring activities, parties, meals and social events throughout Ashima, Ashoke and Gogol's lives. Although the family's circumstances shift as years go by, certain truths remain apparent for each of them. It is through change that characters learn who they are, and what parts of themselves remain constant. Ashoke's life is uprooted entirely after the train wreck in India, which nearly killed him. Afterward, he decides to leave for the United States and when he returns to Calcutta to find a bride, he married Ashima. This changed both their lives. Their initial transition in Cambridge isn't always an easy one. But over the course of many years, Ashima begins to feel that Cambridge is her home.

1. Migration

Since the earliest times, humanity has been on its move. Many people move in to different places because of different reasons. Some move to escape conflict, persecution, terrorism or human rights violation. While many individuals migrate out of choice, many others migrate out of necessity. Today more people live in a country other than the one in which they are born. The most common motivation for relocation is the long desire for a better life.

Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* manages just worldwide migration moving between the occasion in Calcutta, Boston and New York city. Kiran Desai's creation introduced international and global migration. The novel *The Inheritance of Loss* sways between the kitchen of New York, where Biju, an illegal migrant man and the Gorkha insurrection in Kalimpong in 1986, catching the nativist soul of both the locale. In the novel *The Namesake*, Ashoke Ganguli leaves Calcutta and arrives at

America in quest for higher education to do explore in the field of fibreoptics. Subsequent to remaining two years in the USA, he returns to Calcutta and married Ashima. The Diaspora portrayed in this cleverly shows that international movement actuated in them the sensation of the other in the host country basically because of social bewilderment. Jhumpa Lahiri has introduced attire, language, food and ceremonies to investigate social expansion of Ashima and Ashoke. *The Inheritance of Loss* explores different kind of expression of Indian migration. The first influx of migrants arrives at European nations for higher education. Jemubhai Patel leaves for Cambridge in 1939, but his problems are different and unique in related to Ashima's or alternately Ashoke's as he had stepped in England where Victorian qualities actually waited. His identity is basically due to his colour and he turns into sufferer of colonization. Indeed, even subsequent to spending a lifetime in the host country Ashima and Ashoke regard their way to Indian legacy. Jemubhai gets back with disdain for Indian culture. The second influx of immigrants in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, leave their country in the journey for a better living. They are additionally partitioned into Green card bidders and unlawful immigrants. In this way, Desai has analyzed torment of foreigners and the injustice of the world in which one side goes to workers and the other side goes to be treated as a ruler.

Lahiri, then again, has totally ignored the injury of unlawful migrants, their endeavours to procure Green card and the abuse of Indian in the appearance of free lodging. The dilemma of second era immigrants has been depicted by Jhumpa Lahiri carefully by gathering them under the tag of ABCD; American Born Confused Desi. Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi never thought about India as "Sare Jahan Se Acha Hindustan Hamara". They are interested by American culture and attempt to take on it, propels them to make a rushed quest for their own and mental personality.

A brief look at such interest for West is likewise found in the character's legacy of misfortune. Lola and Noni, stuff their bag with mark and spencer panties, eat jam and read Jane Austen. Sai favoured cake and English; however, they don't fall under the mark of ABCD; they are fairly Anglophiles. Food is utilized as analogy of character in both these books. In *The Namesake*, its center is to principally portrays social disorientation. Kiran Desai, on the other hand has used food to depicts class difference and as measuring standard of religious identity. From Desai's creation it is obvious that personality alludes to different ways. A simple ownership of the Green card puts a human identity to God.

2. Ethnicity

Ethnicity and culture in a dynamic society are not monolithic. They are often defined by the economic classes that operate in that particular society. This leads to the idea of interrelationship between capital and culture. Jhumpa Lahiri has her specific views on materialism, ethnicity and culture. These views, though not always overt, are seen scattered in the social behaviour of her characters. Even relationships, both sexual and familial, in her fiction are conditioned by the idea of social exchange theory- implying the cost and benefits to each concerned party. Using this theory, one can analyze to see how economic terms of cost and rewards can be applied to understand the give-and-take aspects of interpersonal relationship. Jhumpa Lahiri is seen implying in varying degrees that the social, cultural. Ethnic and familial interactions of her characters are directed by this necessity to exchange.

Different cultural backgrounds, variant ethnicities and memberships to different communities generate encounters of different worldviews which eventually shape the emotional life in multi-ethnic, multicultural societies like those of India and

the United States. The novel by Jhumpa Lahiri captures both the cultural encounters and the resultant psychological and emotional crises in the lives of her characters.

Responses and attitudes of human beings to the material objects which surrounded them also determine their culture and ethnicity. In fiction, the way the characters experience material objects and find meanings in such objects is a significant way in which the novelists articulate and externalize the culture of these characters. Further, the material objects that surrounded the characters are often the products of economic system and the responses of characters to these products betray the ideologies by which they make sense of the world. Jhumpa Lahiri explores this complex link between the ethnicity and cultural hybridity of the characters and the commodities which surrounded them.

Food and dining are important components of ethnicity and culture. Cultural expressions in fiction and films delve deep into these social practices to show how these social practices to show how these instances could be considered as the defining parameters of one's cultural experience. Food and dining occupy significant space in Jhumpa Lahiri's novel to show how these metaphors are makers of cultural specificity and at times, the makers of cultural hybridity.

The ethno-racial identity is explored in *The Inheritance of Loss* through the lives of the characters Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge educated at Cambridge, and his cook's son Biju, who lives miserably as an illegal alien in New York, which also resulted in darkness, as they were unable to adjust themselves with the society in abroad.

Jemubhai's arrival in England is met with less pomp-he struggles to find a room to-let, and when he does find one mile away from the university, his landlady is unwelcoming and insists on calling him "James". Jemu spends his entire time at

Cambridge locked in his room, studying for fourteen hours a day eating his landlady's inadequate food and not making any friends. His colour, his language all made him the embodiment of 'other' in England and he began to question his identity and his connection to India while there. "Jemubhai's mind begun to wrap; he grew stronger to himself than he was to those around him, finds his own skin odd-coloured, his own accent peculiar. He forgot how to laugh, could barely manage to lift his lips in smile, and if ever did, he held his hand over his mouth, because he couldn't bear anyone to see his gums, his teeth. They seemed too private. In fact, he could barely let any of himself peep out of his clothes for fear of giving him offence. He began to wash obsessively, concerned he would be accused of smelling, and each morning he scrubbed off the thick milky scent of sleep, the barnyard smell that wreathed him when he woke and impregnated the fabric of pajamas".

Biju arrives on a two-week ticket and stays for years, becoming part of the underclass of illegals in New York who make cheap labour for unscrupulous restaurateurs. He changed his jobs again and again and tried hard to adjust himself with the different cultures and fields of artistic activities. The characters like Biju keep their roots in the homeland intact but want to flourish in the foreign land in spite of accompanying stresses and distresses. They are like translated literary texts which sometimes are able to retain originality, but more often they do not create blend of the original and foreign.

"In Tanzania, if they could, they would throw them out like they did in Uganda.

In Madagascar, if they could, they would throw them out.

In Nigeria, if they could, they throw them out.

In Fiji, if they could, they would throw them out.

In China, they hate them.

In Hong Kong

In Germany

In Italy

In Japan

In Guam

In Singapore

Burma

South Africa

They don't like them.

In Guadeloupe-they love them?

No”

3. Culture

The term culture is filled with ample meaning that ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge and intellect. The cultural disparity is one among concept in literature. It focuses on culture and how people are suffered by culture because people migrate to a foreign country to earn money or something. A complex, dynamic and multi-faceted phenomenon such as 'culture' requires process oriented, complex and multifaceted descriptions and reflections. The difficulty that lies in the task of trying to understand and describe cultural process is due to the accepted nature of the concept of culture to

many scientific disciplines as well as the self-understanding of people in society general. The increasing use of the term culture and its equivalence in other languages makes it even more necessary to investigate the development of cultural theory from historical as well as comparative perspectives.

3.1. Cultural conflict in *The Namesake*

“Like many professional Indians, who as an apart of brain drain went to United State, the protagonist of the novel, a young man named Ashoke Ganguli, who comes to the USA for higher studies and research in fiber optics with a prospect and setting down with security and respect”. He married a nineteen years old Bengali girl Ashima from Calcutta and the girl have no idea about the place called “Boston”. She flies away alone to stay with her husband, with lots of instructions from her family members and relatives who came to see her off at Dum Dum Airport, not to eat beef or wear skirts or cut off her hair or forget the family the moment she landed in Boston.

Ashoke and Ashima, represent the first-generation immigrants, attempt to hold on to their ethnic and cultural past in effort to preserve a cultural heritage that is slipping fast in an alien land. These first-generation immigrants try to cultivate a cultural tradition in their children. These effects touch upon the language, religion and literature. “In order to preserve their culture in foreign land, the first-generation immigrants train their children in the Bengali language, literature and history and expose them to their religious customs, traditions, beliefs, food, habits and social mannerisms. Along with this, they train them in the ways of the new land and social customs. In the novel, Ashima teaches Gogol to memorize a children’s poem by Tagore and the names of deities adorning the ten-headed Durga”. Along with this, they also trained them in the ways of the new land and its social customs. “Every

afternoon, before going to sleep, Ashima switches on the television and makes Gogol watch “Sesame Street” and “The Electric Company” in order to make him used to the American way of speaking language”.

Food and religion are two significant markers of culture in *The Namesake*. Lahiri projects the changing food habits of the Ganguli to trace a corresponding cultural change. She also focuses on the way religions and myths get hybridized in the context of the second-generation immigrants. “They learn to roast turkeys at Thanksgiving, to nail a wreath to their door in December, to wrap woolen scarves around snowman, to colour boiled eggs violet and pink at Easter. For the sake of Gogol and Sonia they celebrate, with progressively increasing fanfare, the birth of Christ, an event the children look forward to far more than the worship of Durga and Saraswathi”.

Customs often holds a culture together. Lahiri seems to imply this idea when she traces the life of Bengali Indians in *The Namesake*. Ashoke and Ashima, especially in their initial days in the United States, try to make a circle of Bengali acquaintances. They also get connected to these Bengalis on the occasions of festivals and rituals. “These Bengali families gather together on different occasions like the rice and name ceremonies of their children, their birthdays, marriages, deaths and Bengali festivals like Navratris and pujas. They celebrate these as per Bengali customs, wearing their best traditional attires, thus trying to preserve their culture in new land”.

3.1.1. Multi culturalism

Through different communities, different world views and different culture, it eventually shapes the emotional life in multi-ethnic, multicultural societies like those

of India and United States. Lahiri captures both the cultural encounters and the resultant psychological and emotional crisis in the lives of the character.

“Multiculturalism suggests the coexistence of a number of different cultures. It does not prescribe homogenization and conformity directly, nor does it encourage overtly ethnic, religious, lingual or racial constituents of a particular society to denigrate and alienate each other to such an extent that the fragile balance of such a society is damaged or destroyed permanently”.

3.2. Cultural conflict in the inheritance of loss

Kiran Desai experienced displacement, dislocation and cultural clash. In her novels, she writes about the cultural hybridity of postcolonial migrants and the disgraceful condition of the individuals. In her novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, she deals with her own experience and situation of migrancy, expatriation and alienation from the mother country. She lives between East and West, and the introduction of western elements in a country creates a cultural clash.

3.2.1. The insolent treatment of westernized Indians and traditional Indians

As Sai is from a multi-religious background, she would like to celebrate Christmas. She says, “If I want to celebrate Christmas, I will, and if I don’t want to celebrate Diwali then I won’t. nothing is wrong in a bit of fun and Christmas is an Indian holiday as much as any other”.

The emigrate people in an alien country forms a multicultural aspect. The individuals struggle a lot because of loneliness, freedom etc. due to immigration each character in this novel faces cultural encounters. Biju, who works as an illegal immigrant, humiliated as he is from the third world countries. Biju at the stars and

Indian flag when Biju arrived". Sai who brought up in western culture enjoys her food using fork and knife where in it is hatred by Gyan, who is a Nepali tutor. The two Bengali sisters Noni and Lola, who returns from France, are suffering from the encroachment of their land by GNLFF.

They rushed out:

"This is our land."

"It is our land. It is unoccupied land."

"We'll call the police."

They shrugged, turned back and kept on working.

The novel revolves around the western culture, to which Jemubhai, the protagonist exposes his passive acceptance, while Biju, another central role, resist it actively. Biju, the son of Jemu's cook, came to the States thinking that he could achieve the American dream, but the reality is quite different. Biju is part of Indian traits and that keeps shift from one lowly paid job to another in a hope of getting a green card, the final symbol of having made it.

One can have a feeling that Desai wants to point down the differences between American and England from the immigrants' point of view. It is apparent from his speech that immigrants suffer from social prejudices in both countries.

Another problem presents the fact that Biju deals with his religious beliefs. The Brittany restaurant offers menu consisting of steak and that poses a problem to him: "Holy cow unholy". Biju knew that the reasoning should keep by his side. The visitors of the restaurant were not only Americans but also Indian businessmen eating

steaks. Biju faces a multicultural conflict, and decides to hold on to his Hindu religion.

3.2.2. Relationship between the cook and Sai

The relationship between Sai and cook is another multicultural conflict. Sai spends a lot of time with the cook but both of them are aware of the fact that their social status is different. After the incident in Cho Oyu, the cook's hut is searched by the police. Sai witness thoughtless attitude of police towards the cook. Sai felt embarrassed. She was rarely in the cook's hut, and when she did come searching for him and enter, he was ill at ease and so was she, something about their closeness being exposed in the end as fake, their friendship composed of shallow things conducted in a broken language, for she was an English-speaker and he was a Hindi-speaker.

This multicultural conflict captures the cook's perspective on life. Desai describes him as a poor, uneducated man who lives with the judge in his cottage in Cho Oyu. His only reason for living is a hope to see his son Biju again. However, he lives in distorted reality. Biju posts him letters in which he assures his father thinks that he is satisfied but he doesn't tell the truth. Desai's character of the cook represents the lowest class in the society. One might say that Desai's main point is to show complete poverty people live in. their only hope is dream of better future which is, however, rather insecure. It is again the giant gap between West and East which enables some to live in extreme affluence and some in some extreme poverty.

3.2.3. Conflict in Cho Oyu

The first multicultural conflict in Desai's novel takes place in 1986, in Kalimpong, high in the north eastern Himalayas. The main characters living here are

the judge, the cook and Sai. Desai introduces her characters as they live their difficult lives in background of continuing fights. As the beginning of the story, it is rumored that the insurrection in the hills changed into resistance movement stockpiling men and guns. "It was the Indian-Nepalese this time, fed up with being treated like the minority in a place where the majority. They wanted their own country, or at least their own state, in which to manage their own affairs. Here, where India blurred into Bhutan and Sikkim, it had been always a messy map".

One can see that Desai describes the humiliation and helplessness of their characters against aggressors' behaviour. They are involved in the struggles over "the drawing of borders". The clash appears between the two cultures of Hindu and Nepalese and it clearly declares that fact that violence and injustice are skillfully distinguished under false pretenses of freedom and public interests.

4. Racism

The theme of race is one of the major issues in *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The Namesake*. In order to be able to analyze the concept of race is approached in these novels, it will therefore be necessary to have a closer look at how the term is defined. The term race has proven complex to define, as both the aspect of time as well as specific ways of grouping races are continually being discussed. Still, it is of vital importance for my discussion that a general definition is presented. According to Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, a professor of anthropology, "race is now viewed as a social construction that is primarily recognized by physical appearance, or phenotype". Further, Fluehr-Lobban confirms that such features can be a person's skin colour, hair form, facial features such as shape of nose and lips, eye form and height. Although this definition is based on the American society, it will still serve the purpose for my discussion as it is considered a scientifically acknowledged interpretation of the term.

As a consequence of the dynamic and ever-changing concept of race, substitutes and/or linked terms often appear. Examples of this can be expressions like ethnicity, nationality, culture, background, origin, language and identity. Sometimes such alternative terms can be helpful and make the message more precise, whereas other times substitute terms can confuse the comprehension. Thus, in this thesis the definition by Fluehr- Lobban will serve as a foundation for my arguments.

Gogol changed its name from Gogol to Nikhil others called her nick. He felt more confident than the previous name. Gogol doesn't like the name because the name given by his father is not a common name in America. When he is in elementary school, he liked his name because he did not understand this issue. When he was a teenager, he understood that his name was familiar in America. Finally, Ashoke to Gogol explained the reason he gave that name. Ashoke just explained that Nikolai Gogol was his favorite author. He did not tell Gogol about a train accident and he believed that his favorite author had saved his life. So, the other thing that the reader would think is more a part of Gogol's rebellion against his name is his natural teenage inclination to assert himself. Changing his name is a big step to establish that separation of child and man, traditions that are not felt are being replaced by determining his identity.

Gogol notices the difference between Gogol and Nikhil. There is more going on here than a name change. This has happened to the reader before, where the reader decides that it's time to make a statement on something going on in the story and so make up a post, then pick up the book and find my thoughts pretty much confirmed.

Gogol is enamored with a girl named Ruth who he knows his parents aren't willing to accept with open arms. Then he attends a lecture, one of his cousins being member of the panel, on the subject of what they call "ABCD" or "American-Born

Confused Desi” which brings the plight of someone like Gogol to light. His problem as an Indian in America is not the same as his parents, as they relate to the old country whereas he relates to the new. His name merely brings what Gogol sees more as confliction rather than confusion to a more constant state.

The theme of race is one of the major issues in *The Inheritance of Loss*.

Through the main character in *The Inheritance of Loss* in particular Jemubhai Desai shows how discrimination due to race can influence and wound, and in some cases, even destroy the human mind. The experience of Jemubhai also expands the theme of race into a universal subject. The concept of ethnicity is also important, as the considerable division between Sai and Gyan in 'The inheritance of loss is more ethnic than racial. The term race and ethnicity will be closely linked to aspects of multiculturalism, migration, integration discrimination and power.

The themes of race and ethnicity are present in both *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The Namesake* Both Kiran Desai and Jhumpa Lahiri seem to be playing around with these issues through vivid descriptions of character and plot. External factors like aspects of time, place and terms of integration, and internal factors like personality and the tolerance for other people regardless of race and ethnicity, are of vital importance.

" Once you are an immigrant, you never forget that you are one " said Jorge Ramos. For numerous individuals who choose to immigrate to a new country, many feel a strong sense of isolation in the new environment. They struggle to adapt to a new culture and language, often wondering if immigrating to a new country was a mistake. In Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*, Ashima Ganguli, an immigrant to America from Calcutta, struggles with alienation to adjust to the new American culture. Ashima, along with her husband, Ashoke, has moved to the United States, as

there are numerous opportunities for him. As an immigrant, Ashima is unable to speak English fluently and unlike Ashoke, she is unable to quickly adapt to the new American culture. While being a mother of two children, Gogol and Sonia, Ashima prefers to keep Bengali traditions in America, but as Gogol and Sonia indulge in American culture, she feels a disconnection in her relationship with her children. Through Ashima's experience as a mother in a new country, her children's quick adaptability to American culture and the death of her husband. *The Namesake* identifies the theme of alienation that Ashima feels in the United States.

5. Home sickness

The feeling of homesickness in a foreign land haunts all the time, and this is clearly felt in the novel *The Namesake*. Like other Bengali wives, Ashima also felt upset and homesickness in their three-room apartment, which is far removed from the descriptions of house in English novels she has read. She feels spiritually and emotionally dislocated from the comfortable "home" of her father, full of loving ones and yearns to go back home is "a mythic place of desire" in an immigrant's imagination. As she is in the hospital, admitted for labor, she finds herself placed amidst a group of women who are strangers to her, also in a sense that they are Americans. She feels a stranger among these women. It is the 'American seconds' that tick as she endures the labor pain, but she calculated the Indian time on her hands, visualizing her home in Calcutta and assuming the events that would be unfolding at that moment as she lays in a hospital, thousands of miles away from home. There is a deliberate, constant comparison of the Indian ways that of the American. For instance, in the beginning of the novel, Ashima compares the atmosphere that would persist when a child is brought into this world. The child's birth was a lonesome celebration and the realization that his entry in the world was, unaccompanied and deprived laid

the foundation of that predicament that small child had to experience throughout his life. After their migration from university apartments to the university town outside Boston when Ashoke is hired as an Assistant Professor of Engineering at the University, the shift to this suburban area made Ashima more drastic and distressing.

Feeling lonely and displaced in a foreign land, Ashima begins to feel that “Being a foreigner is a sort of life-long pregnancy. A perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts. It is an on-going responsibility, a parenthesis in what had once been ordinary life, only to discover that previous life has vanished, replaced by something more complicated and demanding. Like pregnancy, being a foreigner Ashima believes, is something that elicits the same curiosity from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect”.

In Desai’s novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, even though Biju is desperate for a green card, at the core of his heart, he is crying for India and its soothing familiarity. America has created a profound chasm in him. When Biju makes telephone calls to his father in India, his imagination vividly recreates the atmosphere of Kalimpong where his father resides. He can “feel the pulse of the forest, smell the humid air, the green-black lushness; he could imagine all its different textures, the plumage of banana, the stark of the cactus, the delicate gestures of ferns...”.

6. Identity crisis

The development of identity was one of the significant conflicts that individuals face. Identity crisis is a period of intensive analysis and exploration of various perspective. In the present quickly changing world, identity crisis might be more common.

In Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, every one of the character struggles with their identity and the power of modernization while attempting to keep up with their emotional connection with each other.

The novel *The Namesake* is about identities. Gogol grows up confused by his pet name. he feels it isn't his own, and it isn't until school. After he was lawfully transformed it to Nikhil, that his dad recounts to him the story behind it. The novel tells by the existence of Ashima and Ashoke Ganguli and how they had leave behind a day existence in India that they had developed to know and very much want to experience the American dream and gave his life themselves and their kids. The significant subject depicted in the novel is identity strikingly represented by examine the significance of one's name. the definition of patrial lineage, background and orientation as a method by which one's predetermination in life is direct such factors that contribute underway with identity are conspicuous of Indian culture, yet came become hindrance for many immigrants who came to the United States one another.

Heritage gives misery and discontent as they attempt to break down their place in American culture. However, named after a popular Russian essayist, Gogol's is a portrayal of his creatures bound to a background of Bengali heritage of which he yearns to break free social distinction likewise leads to the identity crisis that the characters encounter. *The Namesake* follows the existence of Ashoke and Gogol, father and son living in two different times.

In Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, the protagonist Biju encounters many struggles to achieve a stable identity. But he faces lots of conflicts. His situation is more pathetic as he is an illegal immigrant. He was denied his basic rights as a worker as he stays there illegally. Biju finds himself casted in a strange world, where sympathy, co-existence, fellow feeling and peaceful does not seem to exist. He spends

his time changing jobs, enduring intolerable condition. Because of his illegal migrancy he is compelled to work for very low wages and experience extreme enslavement to his employer. At one point when he is fed up with his condition he makes a pathetic appeal to his employer, Harish-Harry to sponsor him for a green card. "Without us living like pigs, said Biju, what business do you have? This is how you make your money, paying is nothing because of you know we can't do anything, making us work day and night because we are illegal. Why don't you sponsor us for our green cards?"

In *The Namesake*, both Ashoke and Gogol belongs to Indian family and both live under severe situation with the Indian culture. Gogol's identity is assaulted by extreme commercialization, realism and the liberty that was qualities of American culture during the 1970s. He believed his folk country India to be background and wishes not be related of which the tradition that of his family. He chooses to affirms to their desires to not digresses from Bengali traditions.

Gogol concede something to the Judge when he charges his name that he is reluctant to concede to his parents. He deceives his parents about his genuine motive, showing a hesitance him after an author essential to his dad. This struggle addresses the necessities to off sets an American identity with a Bengali one. "I hated the name Gogol. I've always hated it".

Globalization is concerned with explaining forms of social and cultural organization whose ambition is to transcend the boundaries of the nation-state and seeks to provide new vistas for understanding cultural flows that can no longer be explained by homogenous Eurocentric narrative of development and social change. Globalization also means the transnational circulation of ideas, languages or popular culture through acculturation. The issues of hybridity, multi-rootedness and

expression of identity, racism, migration are all in some way or the other an effect of globalization. The novels *The Namesake* and *The Inheritance of Loss*, revolves around ideas of race, ethnicity and cultural identity; it focuses mainly on Indian culture and how it has both integrated with and influenced Western culture. When each character in the novels encounters a foreign culture, their experiences vary, but are mainly negative, which is sadly quite realistic. Every experience shows again that the past or cultural identity into one with respect and appreciation for all people. As the world continues to integrate and the boundaries of countries and cultures disappear through globalization, it is becoming more and more unacceptable and politically incorrect to separate people based on race, wealth, origin, religion, gender, language or any other distinguishing human trait.

Conclusion

Culture and identity are frequently linked together, but they should not be thought of as the same. Culture represents the 'micro pattern', the big picture. It includes the customs, beliefs, attitudes, traditions, and rituals of society. Identity represents the smaller 'more micro' meaning we have as individuals. As a modern international expatriate Indian novelist, Kiran Desai experienced displacement, dislocation, and cultural clash. In her novel, she writes about the cultural hybridity of the post-colonial migrant and the unpleasant condition of the individuals.

Lahiri holds a unique place among the Expatriate Writers as well as Indian English Writers. Though she has produced only nine stories and a novel up till now, she has become a mile stone in Indian English Literature. She is the zephyr in the firmament of Indian English Literature. The theme of both, the novel, is similar but they differ widely in two things: Lahiri's treatment of the theme and narrative technique.

Both Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai reflects many similarities and dissimilarities in their psychological view points and their impression of the world. This is reflected in their topic, theme which attributes individuality with the information on the subject and character reaction to the different circumstances, we find ourselves analyzing the idea of struggle in the two renowned authors. Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai deal with class and culture to which they belong, seem to confront the surge of a disciplined world where rootlessness and their alienation. Both Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai attempt to capture reality in prominent style. In her novel, Kiran Desai writes about the cultural hybridity of the post-colonial migrant and the unpleasant condition of the individuals. Her novel *The Inheritance of Loss* deals with her situation of migration, expatriation, and alienation from the mother country.

Through the characters, she gives how her own dual Indian-American up bringing which results in despair. Living between East and West and the introduction of western elements in a country create a cultural clash. The diasporic Indian writers have generally dealt with characters from their displaced community but some of them have also taken a liking for Western characters have convinced in dealing with them. She tries to explore how the meeting of East and West culture brings complications in the life of individuals. The author focuses on many westernized Indians like Jemubhai, Sai, the Cook, Noni, and Lola. The culture of the West has penetrated the lives of Indians, as well as traditional Indians, show their hatred towards western culture leads to clamour in an individual's life. The ill-treatment of Indians is portrayed through the disgrace of Jemubhai in England. However, Jemubhai's adoration towards the west is shown in his hatred towards Tagore's poems and the condemnation of his wife Nimi for welcoming Nehru at the railway station. Through the character of Biju, the writer gives a deplorable picture of Indians living in America. As an illegal immigrant, he suffers a lot. Here turns home penniless. The incorporated portrayal of India and the West is clearly shown through the characters by Kiran Desai. Her characters are stubborn and arrogant, often refusing to cast off the strictures of culture, yet continuing to struggle with loss, poverty, and the trappings of their social class. The character is felt and unmoored, and frequently struggling to survive in the modern world, unsure of whether they will ever see the benefits and profits of globalization. The meeting of the East and West brings change, but not always progress. In the novel *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri we can discuss and question the sense of displacement in the lives of the characters in *The Namesake* and especially its main character Gogol Ganguli.

Moreover, entities like culture, nationality, and belonging—which are the main concerns of the characters in the novel and the reasons for their displacement—tend to be loose and changeable in a contemporary perspective, and an envious sense of freedom and emancipation from these concepts could be traced in the course of the novel. The rampant migrations and migratory lives in the contemporary world have led to the consideration of many aspects of these lives in many academic areas and fields, and naturally, it has become a contemporary major motif for literature. Making its way through diverse considerations like politics and economy, sociology, identity, and subjectivity, language, gender and sexuality, literary studies pay attention to the multitude of these experiences. Transnational studies cannot possibly focus on one of these considerations and ignore the other factors entirely. For example, having a Marxist view, one cannot ignore the role of culture in the economy, the linguistic possibilities for propaganda, the role of sexuality and gender attitudes and preferences in the market and the role of diffuse subjectivities and identities on the global market for the ruling and the ruled classes of the increasing transnationalism of recent times. Therefore, a reasonable study of the subject and its consequences will not be obtained by only clinging to a certain theoretical background in literature.

Kiran Desai gives out India as a concept and a land of hope and desire rather than a home, like Jhumpa Lahiri's. For a comparative study, addressing the theme of migration, identity crisis, cultural conflicts in both these novels, here presents the different views in the novel regarding backgrounds, settings, and phrases of migration. There are also similarities in the prospective and techniques of both novelists. The characters in both novels are so real that it is taken from the piece of life. Even though Kiran Desai and Jhumpa Lahiri couldn't offer a solution they

provide with an aura of hope. Both the novelists have depicted a realistic and touching picture of the perceptible life of the Diasporas.

As we take distance from the colonial world when the transaction of cultures and identities seemed to be obligatory for the people who lived in such an era, we get closer to the world of transnationalism where that obligation seems to be intentional. This means that people in post-colonial times are not necessarily forced by war or colonization to a band on their homes or live under the hegemonic control of a foreign country. They have more freedom to move and choose where to live. Nevertheless, the later consequences of this movement are unknown and cannot possibly be controlled by these people. In this sense, they intentionally begin a new life in a new place that will have its necessities and obligations which can be unknown and unpredictable to them. Further, the exchange of cultures and adaptation to the new cultural urges, where experiences of in-betweenness, displacement and diaspora, and soon, exist, are part of the natural out comes of this intentional obligation. Tourism, the internet, the global market, different international festivals and sports events and overseas university studies are features that have doubled the pace of transnationalism.

This crucial aspect of our times has led to an urgent field of study in the literature that aims to explore the new subjectivity and its out comes in a united globe: transnationality, and subsequently transculturality is born out of it. Therefore, literature also reflects these global trends. Transnational literature or criticism is a concoction of several trends and theories of literature in a new and wider ground which includes several theories of literature that existed before. But in important ways, it leads and / or changes the older directions. Like other theories of literature, it tends to use as many tools of literature it can to analyze literary works from different

angles. It tends to use and as it can analyze literary works from different angles. It tends to use and produce theories of Inter-and Cross-Cultural Understanding which stems from a contemporary ideology- everyone in the world today shares features of life which are no longer national, from their clothes, to what they eat and what they see around themselves provided by the intensive and extensive communication technology and easy and fast availability of commodities and goods from all over the world. Naturally, where there is the theme of migration and related topics, there is also an automatic intention to investigate the theme of displacement and similar consequences in works of literature.

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