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## CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE WRITINGS OF JHUMPA LAHIRI

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Jhumpa Lahiri has conveyed unanticipated and irresistible transformation in Western mind-set towards India and its culture. Her storyline, simple language, inspired combination of Indian fortitude in English and investigation of truth made her to receive a massive significant commendation in the literary kingdom.

Jhumpa Lahiri is an Indian-American author who often focuses on the India Diaspora in her work; Jhumpa Lahiri has become one of the most outstanding American writers of South Asian origin. She has won plentiful awards right through her line of work, with her debut short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* winning the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and her 2013 novel *The Lowland* making the call in of the 2013 Man Booker Prize. Her works are mournful descriptions of the immigrant experience, and endeavor to conduit the cultural and social gap between her adopted country America and the native land India. In her works the temperament and conception of home comes into question. She illustrates the slow progression of cultural adaptation for second age band émigré in a way that few writers have, and the mounting recognition of her works disclose how much these problems are influential on modern societies, both in the West and in Asia.

At present, Indian Americans are America's third-largest population of Asian ancestry, after Chinese Americans and Filipino Americans. A 1992-96 study in California confirmed that Indian-American students outclass academically, outperforming most other migrant groups. Desi refers to second-generation South Asians and most of the young Indian Americans face

Jhumpa Lahiri's writings reveal a realization of the call for for retrieval pedigree in the Indian tradition and a regretful longingness in connection with that. Her pursuit for identity is a noticeable with regard to émigré, the vibrant power effective to bring about this quest is a peak of vigorous commitment flanked by two cultures Indian and Western. This compilation is an acceptance of blame/ responsibility, vocalizations of the outline of hope and bitterness that crop up from the dilemma of the writer positioned involving two traditions, neither of which she can entirely agree to or relinquish. Similar to all emigrants, it echoes as if the western culture figures a part of her scholarly and national make up while Indian culture is a piece of her poignant make up. Lahiri feels opportune that she was competent enough to understand the Indian culture in an innate approach. While very young the Bengali culture got incorporated in her mind by visiting frequently to Kolkata living significant moments with her extensive family.

The lack of concern of her teachers and friends in the US about her recurrent nonattendance from school made her feel at home in India more natural. It is conceivably no hyperbole to say that the works of distinguished writer

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cultural disturbances to some extent and set out to portray themselves and their experiences to the acronym “ABCD”, which means American-Born Confused Desi.

The Hindu American Foundation conducted in 2009 an essay contest in which one of the young writers compare herself to superheroes like Batman and Wonder Woman, due to her "double life" spanning both her parents' distant world and the Minneapolis neighborhood where she grew up. According to her Hinduism, is one of the world's oldest religions, which welcomes elements of many other faiths, and so to be a Hindu in America is to experience as a melting pot within a melting pot. Moreover she feels happy that films such as *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002) and *Slum dog Millionaire* (2008) have endowed with a chance for Americans to discover more about her religion and cultural heritage, fetching her country of origin into the limelight in constructive and positive ways.

In the early 1970, an Indian émigré family arriving in the U.S. would have had many more *raison d'être* to feel remote than a family arriving these days. Until 1970 there were no Hindu Temples to make them feel at home .The first Hindu temple in the U.S., built in Flushing, New York, was open in 1970, but in the present days there are hundreds of temples throughout the country and "Bollywood" films, are often played in theaters devoted solely to south-Indian films .Technological development have shrunk the world into a global village and made it possible for families to stay in touch athwart long distances and several time zones. The same technologies have open to the Americans the rudiments of Indian cuisine, dress, architecture, and societal customs. In the present day scenario, from spices and textiles, to music and art, India is a perceptible and effervescent facet of American life. Due in part to decades of successful immigration, India's charisma in the U.S. is also acknowledgment of the fabulous contributions made by Indian Americans to U.S. business, technology, education, and culture.

Migration can be explained as the practice of departing from one country, region or place of residence to inhabit in a new country. Migration has contributed to the affluence in variety of cultures, the truth or status of feel right to a societal faction that has a universal state or civilizing convention and race in urbanized countries. Individuals who migrate face numerous pressure that can force their psychological well being, including the trouncing of cultural customs, spiritual customs, and societal hold structure, adaptation to a new culture and variation in identity and perception of self. If the person experiences out-of-the-way from his or her culture, not entertained by the 'majority culture' and be short of societal support, an ensuing feel of denial, estrangement and pitiable sense of worth may occur. Migration engrosses the loss of the well-known, together with the informal and vernacular tongue, mind-set, ethics, communal structures and support networks.

Migration generates yearning for home, which in turn, turn out the rewrite of home due to homesickness or homelessness or longing for home. By tolerating this homelessness and statelessness, the immigrants (re)create a new identity in exile. They voice not only for themselves but also for other marginalized people. They decode this “cultural incommensurability” to the world and convey the version of cultural individuality. The migrant is defined by a “separation from origins and essences”, a sense of “un-home-lines”, occupying an indeterminate zone or “place of hybridity”, and leading to a necessary creation of identity (Bhabha 120).

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Historical, political and economic reasons including marriage, higher education and better prospects have led to Migration. Nevertheless, the migrated Indian community has demonstrated superior prudence of fine-tuning, malleability, mobility and ease of understanding. At some point in the primordial era a great numeral of Indians migrated to other parts of Asia to spread Buddhism and to do business. During the British period, foremost lot of Indians migrated owing to depression, denial and regret to the U.K. Africa and U.S.A. Migration was also in gesture in the nineteenth century in order to prosper to the developed countries. Salman Rushdie from his personal experience (1991) asserts –

Exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. If we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties - that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, India's of the mind. (*Imaginary Homelands*, 10).

The Indian Diaspora gives predilection to economic integration more than for cultural integration. Indian diasporic community are victims of harassment and racial discrimination. The uniqueness and diversity of the Indian Diaspora is extraordinary. According to Bhiku Parekh (1993) Indian diaspora is one of the most varied, different religions, dozen castes, many languages, varied cultures and customs. Contemporary Indian diaspora literature comprise of fiction by women writers like Bharati Mukherjee, Sujata Massey, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Indira Ganeshan, Kiran Desai and Jhumpa Lahiri and they have made their homeland outstanding and admired by writing about it. Their works spotlight the issues like homesickness, homelessness, dislocation and displacement. The literature reflects and looks backward to the past and forward at the future thus leading to longingness, premise of continued existence, and cultural incorporation. They also engross a loss of country geographical and cultural, and gain of new land. So Diaspora fiction deals with legroom, move between home and foreign country, between well-known and outlandish, the old and the new.

The disparity and link between these two spaces are recurrent in the novels of Lahiri, which are dissimilar from the regular Indian English fiction. Her stories and novels are the opening to India with its imagery and parody of India of their past, and her reminiscence of an unreal homeland. The protagonist of her works unify their India of remembrance with their present as the country of their birth and its lash do not permit them sensitively to acculturate and take on board in immigrated country. The cross-cultural experiences, idea of homeland, harsh journeys taken by them, racial discrimination, language problem, and culture shock faced by them are the issues of the diaspora discourse. They engage in cultural transmission and double identification. Jhumpa Lahiri, Bharati Mukherjee, Kiran Desai are educated, Westernized cream of the crop who have lived in many countries, multicultural and multilingual. Their second mother tongue is English. Hybridity and Multilingualism or bilingualism is the offshoot of diaspora. They write in the espouse language and show their sense of feel right and fondness for the new home and culture. It is their mindful choice to ditch the element of one's cultural heritage and tradition.

**CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE WRITINGS OF JHUMPA LAHIRI****Source**

1. "A Temporary Matter" (previously published in The New Yorker)
2. "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" (previously published in The Louisville Review)
3. "Interpreter of Maladies" (previously published in the Agni Review)
4. "A Real Durwan" (previously published in the Harvard Review)
5. "Sexy" (previously published in The New Yorker)