

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

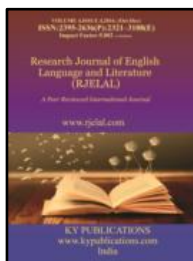
2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

DECIPHERING THE DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS: TRANSNATIONAL AND
TRANSLOCAL DIASPORA IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S *INTERPRETER OF MALADIES* AND
BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S *JASMINE*

APARNA T.V¹, Dr. H.N.PRAKRITHI²

¹Assistant Professor Department of Language, T.John College, Bangalore.

²Chairperson, PG Department of English, Jain University, Palace Road, Bangalore.



ABSTRACT

The South Asian novels explore the Diasporic Consciousness which negotiates the creative exchanges between the world and South Asians on a global level. An examination of the displacement and isolation in Jhumpa Lahiri and Bharati Mukherjee's works may also be seen under the banner transnational and translocal diaspora, developing a fresh perceptive in the understanding of diasporic consciousness of the displaced. The texts portrays the Indian protagonists caught in between the cultural dilemmas, who are in exile. The writers' diasporic consciousness gives a deeper insight into the issues of hybridity and identity from a personal note. The texts convey how every individual struggles to cope up with the double standards of the hybrid society due to displacement. The tenets of diasporic literature and migration studies acts as back drop in the analysis of the phenomenon of migration, the condition of new immigrants, and the sensitivity of estrangement and alienation often experienced by expatriates especially women.

Keywords: Gender, displacement, diaspora

Introduction

In the post-modern world, which is governed by globalized economy, tracing the definition of the concept of locality becomes vain. The concept of place and to understand it as a territory becomes difficult due to the juxtaposition of various borders and boundaries. The physical and geographical borders are reassessed during migration, leading to the formation of multiple social groups within one border. A key text in the field of Diaspora studies is Avtar Brah's *Cartographies of Diaspora* (1996), a theoretical investigation of the economic, political and cultural dimensions of contemporary migration, specifically about South Asian communities. Brah describes Diaspora as "conceptual mapping which defies the search for originary absolutes, or genuine and

authentic manifestations of a stable, pre-given, unchanging identity" (Brah, 1996: 196). Diaspora space is therefore a site of translocation, a space information, which reveals the ephemeral nature of boundaries and includes all human beings in that location, since "Diasporic space is the intersectionality of diaspora, border, and dislocation [...] where multiple subject positions are juxtaposed, contested, proclaimed or disavowed". In this context, the concepts of transnationalism and Translocality arise.

Literary Transnationalism: An Introduction

The modern world of globalization has created a transnational world, where the nations across the globe interact culturally, socially and politically, losing their borders and boundaries. This breakage of boundaries has led to a large scale

interaction between people with diverse cultural and social phenomena, transforming individuals into cosmopolitan entities. The breakage and juxtaposition of nation and its boundaries creates a void in the concept of Nation, which becomes the periphery. As Benedict Anderson points out, the idea of nation is a construct. This is proven true in the present scenario of transnationalism. This construct affects the diasporic consciousness of the immigrants, who gains the complex identities as transnationals. The dawn of the concept of Transnationalism is still under discussion as scholars and theorists have diverse perceptions. Patricia Clavin and Shelley Fishkin identifies World Wars and the subsequent formation of New Nations as a rise in the concept of transnationalism. Paul Jay notes the dawn of globalization and the cultural revolution of the U.S during the 1960s as a source of merging transnational. The beginning and the end of the World Wars paved way for the reconstruction of the concept of Nationalism. James Field, Jr. point out that the phenomenon of transnationalism existed even before the World Wars. According to Field Jr, cultural plurality is an inevitable product in the globalized world, which has led to mass migrations across the globe (5-7). Field also argues that the World Wars contribute to the formation of transnationalism at a larger scale as there were birth and multiplications of various states and nations, which led to the formation of new nationalism across the globe. (20).

During the late 90's the term 'Transnationalism' began to denote the movement across boundaries, juxtaposing multiple nation and its identities. Due to the blurring of the boundaries, the individuals carry baggage of cultures leading to plurality. This leads to question the concept and the formation of nation, which loses its influence and power over people. Calvin points out that the concept of transnationalism strengthens and loosens the borders of the nation. The paradox lies when such transnational relations can simultaneously strengthen and erode national boundaries which have come to be referred to as the transnational network. (Clavin 431, 436). Nation loses its rigidity over the individuals and hence the concept of diaspora is not only governed by the

aspects of place, but it is also influenced by the arising consciousness of the migrants. Steven Vertovec, claims that diaspora is also a type of consciousness in which an individual can experience the sense of belonging and not belonging simultaneously. The identities of the individuals get pluralized, which brings in an evolution of the National Cultures across the world. Lyotard analyses the formation of nations through the rise of meta narratives which is influenced by the social, political order of power resulting in the multiplicity of knowledge, through which the concept of nation is intact. (5). Transnationalism paves way for the interconnectedness between the nation and the immigrants, who interact in the in-between states forming the 'triadic relationship' (Vertovec 1999) through which the relationship between the immigrant groups and their homelands create the concrete diasporic theories.

The influence of Transnationalism subsequently led to the interconnectedness of the space and time across borders, creating 'translocal communities', which identifies the migrants across the ethno-communal and ethno-national borders.

Translocality - An Introduction

The transnational world influences the immigrants affiliation with their homeland, yet, the immigrants are also influenced by the local and native nation-state making it difficult to separate the subsequent sense of 'belonging' to an ethnic group of origin, and 'being' in a transnational world. This phenomenon is referred to as Translocality by Čapo and Halilovich in their works.¹ The evident difference between translocality and transnationalism is that the day to day experiences of the immigrants, the interaction within the social and cultural groups are effectively articulated by the translocal experiences. According to the Čapo and Halilovich¹, unlike the concept of Transnationality, the term translocal refers to the local interactions that the immigrants have with the host society, socially and politically and is not restricted to the nation-state. Translocal communities develop a sense of loyalty to the place of origin, and also reconstructs their identities away from home. Halilovich argues in his work "Translocal Communities in the Age of Transnationalism: Bosnians in Diaspora", that forced exile from

homeland, which leads to separate the identities and practices in par with a locality influences in the formation of 'translocal networks.' (Halilovich 2012). To define the concept of translocality is difficult as it has recently gained momentum in the field of migration studies. It lacks definition and clarity. Simon Peth, in his article "What is Translocality? A refined Understanding of place and space in a globalized world", breaks down the concept as

a variety of enduring, open, and non-linear processes, which produce close interrelations between different places and people. These interrelations and various forms of exchanges are constantly questioned and reworked. (Peth)

Factors such as extensive flow of interaction developed by the immigrants in the social and political contexts creates a close bonding with their homeland, and the host society leading to the cultural embeddedness. Peth identifies a term "Translocal interrelations" which influence different communities and the localities, wherein, each have immediate influence on one another. Peth also states that due to the extensive interactions of commodities and exchanges of ideas between the immigrants and the natives also produce translocal networks, which directly influence one another.

The concepts of immigration and permanent migration disclose only a limited experiences of contemporary migrants. Through the influence with the home and host society, the immigrants develop a new diasporic consciousness which is a form of consciousness that is not bounded by the place. The changing spheres of diaspora studies focuses on the altering consciousness of the immigrants who takes up the translocal and transnational identities. Through the development of communication, transport, and information technology, networks through globalization has strengthened the connections of migrants to multiple places. The paper identifies and analyses the South Asian- American transnational identities which leads to the formation of diasporic consciousness as portrayed in Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine and Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies. Lahiri's short story collection portrays the South Asian American transnational identities which are

constructed due to the changing diasporic consciousness of the old and the new Diasporas. According to Steven Vertovec, the migrated Diasporas of the past, transforms themselves into the 'transnational communities' (6) due to the development of technology, which bridges the home and the other. The paper examines the transnational characters with reference to Steven Vertovec's theory of Diaspora which is a type of consciousness, a social form and a mode of cultural production. In doing so the researcher is able to trace the development of the transnational and translocal Diasporas among the first and the second generation immigrants, whose identities are negotiated in the transnational world. The identities are becoming more transnational and multiple due to the development of technologies, transportation, and global connections between people. Transnational social field give a space to construct and negotiate Asian Indian American multiple identities. The immigrants struggle to preserve their Asian culture, the ethnicity and their subsequent interaction with the host society creating spatial interconnectedness will be a foundation before they built their American identity.

Transnationalism and Translocality: The Formation of Diasporic Conscious

The synonym of mobility and locality are important in defining the formation of transnational identities. Mobility is the ability to move across borders freely, whereas locality is the affiliation to a place, surrounding or a neighborhood. During displacement, the immigrants create and recreate their sense of belonging, wherein they develop the need to live on the transnational world. According to Janine Dahinden in the essay 'The dynamics of migrants' transnational formations: Between mobility and locality' these two has an immense influence in the formation of the four kinds of diasporas which are : 'Localised diasporic transnational formations'; 'Localised mobile transnational formations'; 'Transnational mobiles'; and 'Transnational Outsiders'. (Dahinden 54-57) The characters in the chosen texts are studied under the formation of these four kinds of Diasporas which are influenced by the aspects of mobility and locality. The nine short stories in Jhumpa Lahiri's 'The

Interpreter of Maladies', represents the issues of the immigrants in the translocal and transnationalism. Due to the increase in need for highly skilled laborers in America, there were mass migrations by the South Asians to America looking for better opportunities. These immigrants established themselves as the First generation migrants who carry a baggage of memories of their homeland. They proliferated their cultural and social norms, juxtaposing and re-creating their diasporic experience. In doing so, these migrants gained a hyphenated existence at the host society. Based on the loss of the motherland, an absence generating a traumatic and never-healing wound, the mourning for the lost homeland is then transmitted to the subsequent generations. The second generation immigrants are well accustomed to the host society as their sense of belonging is influenced by their place of birth. To them, the idea of 'home' is the place where they were born and hence, their land of origin becomes the other. Due to the transnational networking, the borders are blurred, which connects people across the borders, developing a newer kind of nation-state. For Vijay Mishra, the Indian diasporic imagery corresponds to "any ethnic enclave in a nation-state that defines itself, consciously, unconsciously or through self-evident or implied political coercion, as a group that lives in displacement" (Mishra 2007: 14). Its diasporic transmission crosses the rigid boundaries between inner and outer, between here and there, transforming mourning into melancholia. Diaspora discourse therefore conveys the complex and fluid reality of national and cultural belonging in globalizing modernity, revealing moments, traces and fragments of a lost past. Inspired by Clifford, Mishra, in theorizing diasporic imagery, acknowledges that the sense of displacement is the common denominator of all Diasporas, resulting in countless attempts to (dis)connects, mix and identify across the globe. The diasporic experience, in short, involves a significant crossing of borders, which may be the borders of a region, a nation or a language. The Diaspora, as a consequence, produces tensional crossings, encouraged by the rapid and radical changes in modern mobility and connectivity.

The stories of Lahiri could be classified based on the setting of the geographical locale, which are based on India and The United States of America respectively. The characters in the short stories undergo a massive change in their diasporic consciousness, due to the shift in locale. Place and space has an important contribution in the formation of the diasporic consciousness. Due to the shift in the landscape, the immigrants undergo a massive transformation, wherein the cultures of the host society gets hybridized with that of the homeland. In *A Temporary Matter* a young couple Shoba and Shukumar indulge in exchanging confessions after a long silence to cope with the failure in their marriage. The characters represent the '*Localised Diasporic Transnational Formations*', who are second generation immigrants, who move across the borders to their country of origin and the host country. They become exiles, in their own world, due to their inability to accept the death of their still-born child subsequently causing lack of communication between each other. Unable to forget the absence of Sukumar during her delivery, Shoba's sudden transition to the "woman she'd once claimed she would never become (01) shows the influence of spatial interconnectedness, gaining a '*Translocal Interrelations*' with the culture of the host society. She was described as a person who would "prepare for surprises, good and bad." (6). But her experience of losing a child has changed her to a different individual, who "hadn't prepared for such an ordinary emergency." (9) when there was a power failure. Vertovac's definition of diaspora as a consciousness which is caused due to the inability of an individual to accept the loss of one's identity, Sukumar becomes diasporic in his consciousness. He is mentally and physically displaced from his idea of home, as they become refugees in the places where each do not frequent. A.K.Mukerjee comments on their relationship stating that, "The marriage bond, which is still considered sacrosanct in India, is gradually slithering down under the pressure of new needs under a different background" (280-81). When they start their confessions during the power failure, it also symbolically represented the breaking of a family. Being a first generation migrant, Shukumar amalgamated with ease to the new

society, and took up roles that challenged the gender construct of Indian society. Lahiri's character here represents not only the formation of Translocal relations through transnationalism, but also represents the interaction the individual has with their homeland through the struggle to keep the relationship alive that represents the cultural roots, paving way for the rise of a new consciousness which amalgamates the home and the other.

In *When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine*, Lahiri represents the First and the Second Generation migrants, their conflicts and the development of the diasporic consciousness being away from home and being the other. Though Mr. Pirzada is from Dacca, a part of the South-Asian region, which is separated by the constructed borders, Lilia's parents refuse to accept him as an Indian represents the pre-constructed identity formations created by the borders. Lilia's parents, can be categorized under the '*Localised Diasporic Transnational formations*', who are socially, culturally, economically and politically infused with the host society, and are the settled transnationals who maintains high level ties with their homeland. Being a temporary immigrant or rather a first generation migrants, Mr. Pirzada, could be categorized as the '*Transnational Outsiders*', who moves across the borders less and has less social affiliation. He feels more attached to his homeland, with his pocket watch "set to the local time in Dacca." (30). Leaving behind his wife and seven daughters for a fellowship, he carries a baggage of ties with his homeland, which he cherishes and spreads along through his communication and interaction with the people. He comes to the home of Lilia to eat with her parents and to watch the news of the Indo-Pakistan War. He maintains what Vertovac calls the "triadic relationship" (5). His divided loyalties between the countries of origin, the new country in which he resides, creates tensions in shaping his consciousness. The agony of being separated from his family and his homeland shapes his diasporic consciousness. Lilia's inability to understand the difference between Indian and a Pakistani, her inadequate knowledge on the Indian history, her assimilation into the American culture represents her as the second generation immigrants who are

also known as '*Localised mobile transnational formation*', the immigrants who move back and forth across the borders and homelands. The news on Indo-Pakistan War acts as a transnational agency, which blurs borders and connects territories. Lilia's reviving interest in knowing about India, the land of her origin stems from her interaction with Mr. Pirzada and by witnessing the discussions of her parents during the dinner. The translocal interconnectedness develops and she is eventually influenced by the other communities represented by Mr. Pirzada and her parents. The assimilated cultures of the host society which are propagated through academics also act as the transnational agency of influencing the diasporic consciousness. Her renewed diasporic consciousness which is affiliated with the homeland is evident when she broods, "I knew what it meant to miss someone who was so many miles and hours away, just as he had missed his wife and daughter for so many months" (42). The ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity is brought out evidently through the translocal influences.

The story *Interpreter of Maladies* represents the influence of place on an individual, where the idea of 'home' and the 'other' gets subverted. Mr. Kapsi, the tour guide and an interpreter at a doctor's clinic becomes the Interpreter of Maladies of the society which is drawn apart by westernization, creating cross cultural influences. Mr. and Mrs. Das, American born Indians visit India along with their family. The influence of American culture is evident when Mr. and Mrs. Das feels bored. The author shows staunch contrast between the first and the second generation immigrants. Mr. and Mrs. Das represent the diaspora of '*Localised Mobile Transnational formation*', denoting the second generation immigrants who are in mobile across the borders. Lahiri shows how the family of Mr. and Mrs. Das feels as the 'other' due to their lack of relationship between their homelands. Mrs. Das' malady of having a son outside marriage, she seeks the solace in sharing her malady with Mr. Kapasi, who is an interpreter of all the maladies. "Eight years Mr. Kapasi, I've been in pain. I was hoping you could help me better, say the right thing. Suggest some

kind of remedy”(65). The translocal interrelations among the different people, who belong to same communities, yet are different due to the shift in the borders shows the influence of the interactions which could happen. Through the story, Lahiri shows the life of the settled immigrants in the European society, their development of a diasporic consciousness, where, they are influenced more by the land of settlement than the land of origin.

Lahiri also portrays the experiences of Indian immigrants in India, who are moved to the margins of the society due to the notions of border. In the story ‘*A Real Durwan*’, where Boori Ma, a Bengali, who is transported to Calcutta, after the partition. She works as a sweeper of a stairwell in an apartment. She represents the category of ‘*Transnational Outsiders*’, having no affiliation with the new land. She calls herself as ‘an outsider’, and she feels that she is “burned like peppers across her thinning scalp and skin, was of a less mundane origin.”(75). Her interaction with the people in the apartment about her past, her lifestyle, shows how memory serves as an agent of transnationalism which helps in building the interconnectedness in the land inbetween her home and the other. Being in the world of diaspora, it is the ability to live in the transnational world. Jhumpa Lahiri highlights the impossibility of an exile that is interconnecting emotional pain and loneliness to others through the characterization of Boori Ma: “Knowing not to sit on the furniture, she crouched, instead, in doorways and hallways, and observed gestures and manners in the same way a person tends to watch traffic in a foreign city” (176).

Boori Ma’s diasporic consciousness is evident when she articulates her memory of the past portraying her physical and psychological alienation. The shift to another locale is affecting her sense of belonging and she is portrayed to carry a baggage of her past. Her struggle to get accustomed to the new society, which is only differentiated by the borders, represent the importance of place in constructing the diasporic consciousness. In the short story *Sexy*, Lahiri shows the diverse cultural interactions between different communities, which develop the ‘translocal interconnectedness’ transforming and influencing one another. The story

revolves around a failing marital relationship of an unnamed man with an English woman, who is introduced as Laxmi’s cousin’s husband. Dev, a Bengali, on the other hand is also seen having an extra marital relationship with Miranda. Through the constant interaction with Laxmi, who briefs Miranda the miseries her cousin undergoes due to her husband’s extra-marital relationship, she comes to a realization and accepts with the fact that she is attracted to Dev for his age and his race. She becomes eager to learn about India, which shows the cross-cultural interactions. Vertovac’s definition of diaspora as a means of ‘cultural production’ applies here, wherein Lahiri shows the amalgamation of two cultures, which are constantly at production and reproduction. The American and Indian culture is juxtaposed through interaction between different people. During the course of interaction, the relationship slowly fades as she comes to terms with the fact that she is attracted to Dev and she can only be a mistress to him. When Rohin, Laxmi’s cousin’s son gives her a definition of sexy as ‘loving someone you don’t know’. His statement about his father who “... he sat next to someone he doesn’t know, someone sexy, and now he loves her instead of my Mother” (108) sows seeds of realization. Miranda’s attraction to Dev also portrays the relationship between young immigrants abroad, whose marital relationship is falling apart due to the various cultural and social interactions. She becomes diasporic in her own world, showing that the sense of alienation also exists within one’s own homeland.

Mrs. Sen represents the experiences of a first generation immigrant, who is trying to accommodate herself into the transnational world of plurality. The narrator of the story, is a child named Eliot, who comes under the care of Mrs. Sen. She is the stereotypical representation of the Old Indian diaspora, carrying a baggage of homeland. She falls under the category of ‘*Transnational Outsiders*’, who embodies the loneliness due to cultural hybridity. Mrs. Sen’s association with Eliot, and his subsequent understanding of the non-European women, whom he contrasts with his mother’s attributes shows the interaction between two communities. Mrs. Sen’s constant reference to

'fish', her families portrays the realities of the Indian wives who struggle to accept themselves in a new culture. Bharati Mukerjee in the Massachusetts Review states, "When an Asian man comes to America for economic transformation, and brings a wife who winds up being psychologically changed" (47). When Mrs. Sen represents her Indianess through her way of dressing, her Indian cultural etiquettes which are being insulted by Eliot's mother evidently depicts the struggle of cultural interaction. Her experience of buying fish and taking it home in a bus, which bothers her co passengers suggest the struggle she goes through to accommodate in the culture. Her experience in the new world represents the diaspora as what Vertovac's calls as a social form, where multiple memories of the homeland are recurred creating common ties with the people of same community, but paving an inevitability to accept the host society. (Vertovac 4-5). Her diasporic consciousness is deeply rooted in the expressing Indianess, and Indian identities which could recreate the memories of her homeland. "Do you know how many Sens are in the Calcutta telephone book?"(124). Eliot notes that "When Mrs. Sen said home she meant India, not the apartment where she sat chopping vegetables" (116). She rightly represents the Indian immigrant who is lost in the power system of the host society, who stuck in the hierarchy of political discourse which is represented through Eliot's mother. The struggle Mrs. Sen undergoes to accommodate herself into the new world represents every immigrants struggle to retrace her diasporic consciousness in the new world.

Sanjeev and Twinkle in *The Blessed House* are representatives of 'Localised diasporic transnational formations' and 'Localised mobile Transnational formation' which represents first and the second generation immigrants respectively. Twinkle who is a second generation immigrant living in America is fascinated by the statues of Mother Mary and Jesus Christ showing the spatial interconnectedness between the two cultures. Though she is from an Indian origin, she is influenced by the western ideologies that shape her liking for the Christian artifacts present in their new house. Sanjeev on the other hand, represents the

first generation immigrant. He interacts with the new culture, trying to accommodate with the diasporic world. Sanjeev's emphasis on removing the Christian artifact, portrays the cultural clash that occurs in the transnational world. Twinkle and Sanjeev's interaction represents the influence of the two communities on one another, creating new consciousness. When Sanjeev "pressed the massive silver face to his ribs, careful not to let the feather slip, and followed her" (157) represents the breaking of nation and boundaries, and the erosion of the national borders in the transnational state. It also depicts his acceptance of the cultural ideology which is dawned upon by the host society. Through the interaction with the plurality of the culture Lahiri shows how the cross-cultural identity formation leads to the development of the diasporic consciousness.

The final story of the collection, "The Third and Final Continent" "represents how the power structures are being employed and built upon on the South Asian People by the Occident. The story opens with a narrator who moves from India back in 1964 to London, in search of better prospects. He reencounters and narrates his experience with the host society, wherein he starts to amalgamate himself with the people in power. Representing the 'Low Transnational Mobility' diaspora, the narrator slowly accommodates and transforms to become 'Localised diasporic transnational formations' becoming a settler in the host country. He begins his journey by spending his initial days with Bengalis, which represents the etho-communal consciousness that provides a solidarity. He moves to America and settles at the house of Mrs. Croft for rent. His relationship between Mrs. Croft develops, into a deeper one when the narrator continued his routine of sitting next to Mrs. Croft on the piano bench, hearing her complementing the 'American flag on the moon'. The borders and boundaries of the world breaks when the narrator starts interacting with the world across, travelling and transporting cultures along. He feels the innate connectedness between his mother and Mrs. Croft, both suffered after their widowhood. When he moves out of Mrs. Croft's house after the arrival of Mala, he feels Mala's presence in his life to be stranger. The narrator's

inability to accept Mala's dressing sense in the city of Boston represents his imbibition of the host country's culture. The communities' interaction with one another helps in strengthening the transnational relationships, building a relationship between the people of different nations. When he read the obituary, he realizes that "Mrs. Croft's was the first death I mourned in America for hers was the first life I admired; she had left this world at last, ancient and alone, never to return"(196). In the final continent, the narrator is seen to have got accustomed to the nation. He closes the narration stating that:

Whenever he is discouraged, I tell him that if I can survive on three continents, then there is no obstacle he cannot conquer. I am not the only man to seek fortune from home, and certainly I am not the first. Still, there are times I am bewildered by each mile I have travelled, each meal I have eaten, each person I have known, and each room in which I have slept. As ordinary as it all appears, there are times when it is beyond my imagination (197-198).

Jasmine – The 'Transnational Mobiles': Bharati Mukherjee's novel, *Jasmine* constructs and represents that the borders of the nations across the globe have become more permeable due to the growth of the transnational networking. Extensive migration of people has caused a need to recreate the transnational boundaries. Jasmine is the reconstruction of the fluid identities of a young woman, who undergoes transformation when she comes into contact with different places. Born as Jyoti, in a small village in Hasnapur, Punjab, she is given the identity as Jasmine by her husband Prakash Vih, who is portrayed as a free-thinker who instigates her to be independent, and self-sustaining individual. Being constrained under the societal norms, she breaks the boundaries constructed around her in the name of nation state when she decides to pursue her husband's dream of going to America. The sense of dislocation haunts her in India, when people at home fail to get in terms with her individuality. During her first day at America, she is raped by Half Face, whom she kills in order to seek revenge. Her action of burning the belongings of her

husband symbolically represents her movement away from her homeland. She becomes the diaspora of 'Transnational Mobiles' who are always on the move for the improvement of the self. (Dahinden56). Being away from the ethnicity of one's cultural production, she proves that the breakage of borders and the collapse of nations through constant movement paves way for sustaining in the multicultural world. Her struggle at her country of origin to fit into the societal norms represents her psychological alienation in the host society. She fits into the diaspora due to cultural production as she feels alienated in her homeland.

The notion of West as a nation that provides freedom and equality is broken by her experiences. The cultural interaction of Jasmine with the US, thereby, creates the translocal interconnectedness which are evidently represented when she conceives a child of Bud outside wedlock and leaves him for Taylor. The novel projects the formation of translocal networks due to the cultural interaction. She blends easily with the American culture, thereby making the communities across the borders interact. She feels the presence of Indian culture as the alien which defines her cultural production. During the interaction within and outside the borders, she overcomes the barriers of the nation-state. When cultural pluralities interact in forming the identities, it results in the production of cultural values. In the in between space of interaction, the "boundary becomes the place from which something begins, the bridge gathers as a passage that crosses" (Bhabha, 1994:5).

Jasmine represents the *transnational mobiles*, which is always on the move, moving across the borders for the empowerment of her quality. Each of her identities, which are Jyoti, Jasmine, Jazzy, Jaze, Jane, took place in a different space, i.e. India, Florida, New York and Iowa. She interacts with the changing cultural pluralities, marginalized due to her racial identity; she raises and transgresses the boundaries of imprisonment, crossing the borders of the self and the other. She conceives outside marriage, she becomes intimate with the men outside the culture to which she belong, yet she becomes unified with the diverse identities that she develops in the due course of the

time. "I have had a husband for each of the women I have been, Prakash for Jasmine, Taylor for Jaze, Bud for Jane, Half-Face for Kali" (197). She represents the power of transition and transgression, changing herself during her journey.

Jyoti was now a sati-goddess; she had burned herself in a trash can funeral pyre behind a boarded-up motel in Florida (176). She identifies her rebirth in the American society as Jase stating "today, I had been reborn, although she wonders how many more shapes are in me, how many more selves, and how many more husbands?" (Ibid)

Her diasporic consciousness undergoes a change when she shifts her locale. She doesn't seem to carry a cultural baggage when she travels across the borders. She seeks to find solace with herself with the things she undertakes. She celebrates her transformation due to the contact with the transnational borders and living in between the spaces. She gains a new diasporic consciousness when she moves away from India. Her shift in identities, her transformation as an individual, and her decision to leave Bud to live with Taylor suggest her acceptance to blend in with the new world.

Conclusion

Mukherjee and Lahiri represent the transnational world that offers potentials to the diasporic communities in the homeland and of the host society. In forming the diasporic identities, the relationship between the diasporic groups and the imagined communities play an integral part. As Butler (2000) argued that the homeland's relationship with the transnational world doesn't end when the initial group departs. The characters that are represented in the chosen texts are representative of the various diaspora in the transnational world. Each characters' diasporic consciousness undergoes transition wherein the first generation immigrants represented by Mrs. Sen, Sanjeev, Mr. Pirzada, Boori Ma, the unnamed narrator whose diasporic consciousness carry a baggage of cultural plurality. Their strong affiliations with the homeland makes them feel at the periphery in the host society. Their struggle to accommodate to the cultures of the host society, to accommodate in the plural identities, yet they

eventually blend into the society of the new world. The second generation immigrants, due to the contact with the West, have a sense of dislocation with the homeland or the land of origin as it was with Twinkle, Mr. and Mrs. Das, Lilia and Shobha. The immigrants of the second generations becomes settles in the transnational space, living in the in between spaces. The diasporic consciousness of the first and the second generation immigrants undergo a shift when there is an interaction between the complex communities. During this interaction, the communities amalgamate their difference, which helps in the blurring of the constructed nation boundaries and borders, making the idea of nation-state as null.

The concept of translocality is still under discussion by the researchers in the diverse fields. Through the understanding of transnationalism and translocality, which represents the present migration of people across the globe for an outward movement, propagates the formation of new culture and nationality, which assimilates the diverse groups in the society into one.

End Note

¹ Halilovich, Hariz, "Translocal diasporas in transnational contexts: Bosnian Migrants in Austria, the USA and Australia", 50.1 *International Migration*(2012), 162-178.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*. New York: Flamingo. (1999)

Mukherjee, Bharati. *Jasmine* New York: Grove Press.(1989)

Secondary Sources

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso, 1993. Print.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Culture Economy*. *Public Culture* 2.2 (Spring 1990): 4-24. Web.

Appadurai, A. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (1996).

Bauböck, Rainer, and Thomas Faist. *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam University Press, 2010.

- Baser, Bahar. *Diasporas and homeland conflicts: A comparative perspective*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.,2015.
- Bhabha, Homi "The Location of Culture." London: Routledge. (1994)
- Brah, Avtar. "Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting Identities." Routledge,2005.
- Brubaker, R. W. "Ethnicity Without Groups." Cambridge: Harvard University Press. . (2004)
- _____.The "diaspora" diaspora', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (1): 1-19. (2005)
- Butler, K. 'Defining diaspora, refining a discourse', *Diaspora* 10 (2): 189-220. (2001)
- Clavin, Patricia. "Defining Transnationalism." *Contemporary European History* 14.4(November 2005): 421-39
- Clifford, James. 'Diasporas,' *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 9, pp. 302-38. (1994)
- Cohen, R. "Global Diasporas: An Introduction." London: UCL Press.(1997),
- Conradson, D., and McKay, D. 'Translocal Subjectivities: Mobility, Connection, and Emotion.' *Mobilities* 2(2), pp. 167-174. (2007).
- Dahinden, Janine. "The dynamics of migrants' transnational formations: Between mobility and locality." In Bauböck. (ed) *Diaspora and transnationalism: Concepts, theories and methods*. Amsterdam University Press, 2010.51-72
- Delaney, D. and Leitner, H. "The political construction of scale." *Political Geography* 16 (2), pp. 93-97. (1997)
- Faist, T., and Reisenauer, E. "Introduction: Migration(s) and Development(s): Transformation of Paradigms, Organisations and Gender Orders." *Sociologus* 59(1), pp. 1-16. (2009).
- Field, Jr., James A. "Transnationalism and the New Tribe." *Transnational Relations and World Politics*. Eds. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1973. 3-22. Print.
- Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies— Presidential Address to the American Studies Association, November 12, 2004." *American Quarterly* 57.1 (March 2005): 17-57. *Project MUSE*. Web.27 Aug. 2016.
- Gilroy, P. "The Black Atlantic: Double Consciousness and Modernity." Cambridge: Harvard University Press.(1993),
- Hall, Stuart, 'Cultural identity and diaspora', in Jonathan Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp. 222-37 (1990)
- _____.1991 'Old and new identities, old and new ethnicities', in Anthony D. King (Ed.), *Culture, Globalization and the World-System*, Houndmills: Macmillan, pp. 41-68
- Halilovich, Hariz. "Trans-Local Communities in the Age of Transnationalism: Bosnians in Diaspora." *International Migration*. 50.1(2012): 162-178.
- Jay, Paul. "Global Matters: The Transnational Turn in Literary Studies." Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2010. Print.
- Liotard, Jean-François. "The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge." Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997. Print.
- Mukhrejee, Arun. "Oppositional Aesthetics: Readings from a Hyphenated Space." Toronto: Tsar Publications.(1994)
- Peth,Simon "What is Translocality? A refined Understanding of place and space in a globalized world" <http://www.transre.org/en/blog/what-translocality/> : July 29th 2017.
- Rushdie,Salman *Imaginary Homelands* London: Granta Books, 1991
- Safran, William 1991 'Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return', *Diaspora*, vol. 1, pp. 83-99
- Vertovec, Steven 1998 'Three meanings of "diaspora", exemplified among South Asian religions', *Diaspora*, vol. 6, No. 3 (in press)