

**Tribhuvan University**

**South Asian Female Diaspora in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies***

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**By**

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled South Asian Female Diaspora in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Ishwari Bakhatihhas been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## Abstract

*This research focuses on the study of Indian female diaspora and their sufferings in the United States. Jhumpa Lahiri's first debut work *Interpreter of Maladies*. It basically examines diasporic condition of female characters, who belong to India. All the characters in Lahiri's stories are shaped by adverse impacts of diaspora. The researcher focuses on the women characters who are forced to migrate to an alien land with their husbands in search of better life. In other words, the work is an effort to clarify the research question that how life of female becomes complex in foreign land which is totally different from the land where they are brought up. It also traces out the condition whether they are satisfied with their lives. Each and every attempt in this paper resonates with Lahiri's discovery of alienated self in *Interpreter of Maladies*.*

Key Words: diaspora, alienation, psychology, trauma, guilt

This research work explores the lifestyle, world views and conflicts of the south Asian women immigrants in Jhumpa Lahiri's short stories collection *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). The characters in the stories are the means to explore immigrants suffering in newland. The researcher proposes to study four stories out of nine stories from the short story collection: "Interpreter of Maladies", "Mrs. Sen's", "This Blessed House" and "The Third and Final Continent". Most precisely the researcher aims to bind the female characters in the diasporic periphery. The characters like Mrs. Mina Dutta, Mrs. Sen, Twinkle and Mala are the portrait of the feelings of diaspora in the completely new land from their origin. The female characters are shown as a medium by which we can know the condition of Indian housewives in United States. Except Mrs. Das, they all travel abroad with their husband in search of better lifestyle. They reflect on issues such as; identity crisis, cultural diffusion, disruption and dislocation

of family, disturbance in relationship and tradition.

In the stories, male characters immigrate to different parts of America due to various causes mostly regarding their career options. People migrate to developed countries for their further studies or for their better lifestyles. Due to globalization the world has turned into small village. One can easily travel from one nation to another for their higher achievements. The number of immigrants has increased day by day. Immigration is seen as the consequence of globalization, the process which enables nations with free trade, services mobilization of manpower and resources resulting in the sustainable economy.

Globalization is a word used to describe the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures and population, brought about by cross border trade in goods and services, technology and flows of investment, people, and information. It fosters sound economy in the third world countries as well. Globalization refers to the global economic integration of many formally national economies into one global economy, mainly by free trade and free capital mobility, but also by somewhat easier or uncontrolled migration. It is the effective erasure of national boundaries for economic purposes. It's the means to spread the technology information and job across nation borders and cultures. It also enables to free trade and interdependence of the nations.

However, immigration is seen as a consequence of globalization throughout the world. It tempts the people to migrate from origin land where they belong. They are compelled to shift temporarily or permanently. The most common reason behind it is for education, technologies, seeking for better lifestyles higher opportunities. In Today's scenario people choose United States as preferred destination. Immigration to the United States is the international movement of non-US Nationals in order to reside

permanently in the country. Lawful migration has been a major source of population growth and cultural change throughout much of the US history. Because the United States is a settler colonial society, all Americans, with the exception of the small percentage of Native Americans, can trace their ancestry of immigrants from other nations around the world. Khalid Koser;

Migrants can be categorized based on whether they migrated voluntarily or involuntarily, whether they are economic or political migrants, or their legal status. These categories, while somewhat useful, tend to blur reality, and the situation migrants find themselves can change quickly. It is difficult to measure migration for a number of reasons, and any statistics produced are opened to misuse. (18)

Migrants could have been categorized in number of ways but whatever be the categorizations, they can blur the reality and the changes in the situations the migrants can undergo. The actual migration can be difficult to measure. Koser further clarifies the consequences migration can change:

People can stop being migrants by returning to their own country or by obtaining citizenship of the host country. National policies on migration and citizenship balance assimilation with multiculturalism. Migrant communities often from diasporas and maintain transnational attachments. (18)

The situation is always alive that the status of migrant can be reversed as a migrant can return back to his/her own country and opt to remain migrant no longer. Migrant could be assimilated to the national mainstream and can gain the status of different cultural group. This results in formation of diaspora and those cultural group maintain cultural connection to their previous country. They thus, maintain transnational attachments.

Globalization is a vague process where nation tends to share, trade, technologies, media, cultures, ideas and values. It can be economic, cultural or political. It enables the interdependence of the world to foster though free trade. People can have greater opportunities and lifestyles where they can be free to enhance their career. Usually non-westerners are totally affected by the western idea, values, medic and culture. People find more option to invest and foster their business target. The first world nations always seek for the skilled man power and labor forces due to population. Thus, the people from third world country highly benefited from this prospect.

Lane Crothers in his *Globalization and American Popular Culture* writes, “In broad terms, analysts of cultural globalization focus on the question of how Western goods, services, ideas, values, and media affect local, usually non-Western cultures once they enter the new markets opened by globalization” (27).

Similarly, Martin Albrow in his *Globalization, Knowledge and Society* writes,

Globalization refers to all those process by which people world are incorporated into a single world society, global society. Globalization is one of the forces which assist in the development of globalization. But it is only such force and the relation between it and globalization is asking to that between universalism could not have been sufficient. Universalism should not have been sufficient. (22)

Globalization on other hand assists the process of immigration where people are tempted to leave their country of origin. and settle in the host country.

International migration occurs when people cross state boundaries and stay in the host state foe some minimum length and time. Migration occurs for many reasons. Many people leave their home countries in order to look for economic opportunities

in another country. It is the movement of people into a destination country where they does not belong.

In regard to South Asian nations formally people choose Emirates UAE for the first destination and secondly to the United States. South Asian nations are developing countries and have higher expectation with US and western countries. There have been tendency to reside in these countries as naturalized citizens or permanent residents or as refugees. US is seen as the hunting destination for youths as they supposed to find better opportunities and scopes regarding other nations. In the article published in the online journal of Migration Policy Institute, "Asian Immigrants in the United States" Zong Jie and Jeane Batalova write

Immigrants first arrived in US during 19th century primarily low skilled farm labors. In recent decades' population growth substantially, with 2.4 million immigrants reside in US as of 2015 which is second largest immigrants destination after Mexicans. In 2016, Indians were the top recipients of high-skilled H-1B temporary visas and were the second-largest group in the international students of US. US is the third most popular destination for Indian immigrants worldwide, after United Arab Emirates and Pakistan according to mid-2015 estimates by United Nations Population Division. (18)

Immigrants of the first world have got a long history. At the beginning, they entered the first world as low skilled farm workers. In the recent years, skilled workers migrate to the first world as high skilled people and international students. This has become a basic trend at present. Whatever be, they migrate to the foreign soil in search of better opportunity and better future and they leave their motherland and culture behind resulting in various psychological sufferings.

Lahiri as an American of Indian origin won 2000 Pulitzer Prize for her short

stories collection *Interpreter of Maladies*. She was born of Bengali parents in London. They moved to United States when she was two. She frequently travelled India in her childhood days with the collected experience of native land which in turn reshaped her stories and novels. Being an immigrant's child she overcame so many issues which was the subject matter in her stories later. She heard stories from parents of struggle being immigrants from India. Some of her short stories are based on the struggle experience from her parent's side.

In her stories selected here, all the male characters are in the US for supporting their family with academic career. Mr. Das is a science teacher in middle school in New Brunswick. Mr. Sen is a professor of mathematics at a college. Sanjeev works in the office before he was in Palo Alto on business and Mala's husband has a full time job in America in the processing department of library of MIT. Some of the stories carry the experience of writer's parents as immigrants in US. All the male characters here are in the new land are deal with academic profession with their family. All of them seem to be there seeking better career options.

Lahiri portrays the impact of American life on Indian identity and relationship through her stories and novels. She presents Indian characters being the consumers of other culture. America in one hand presented as a land of opportunities and on other hand as a land of loneliness. The characters miss the warm family ties and tradition felt with in their country which they lack in the new land. While visiting India where their parents reside, they make a trip for cultural sightseeing with their children. As born and raised in the foreign land they have an urge to know the land of their origin as much as possible. It is important as they belong to new generation. They are born in totally new culture they are astonished to see the driving practices which they consider wrong: "Daddy, why is the driver sitting on the wrong side in this car, too? To that

Raj clarifies before the driver “In America, you know...it confuses them” (48).

In Lahiri’s stories, there is an issue of diasporic identity which focuses on the hazardous experience by immigrants in the process of settlement in the new country. They deal with acculturation, cultural displacement and generational differences. It seeks for the new way of thinking of new possibilities in the new land. They focus on the miscommunication and complex relationship. Moreover, there have been a problem in relationship incompletely new land and new culture where they belong.

Oh God, Twinkle, please, I didn’t mean it. He had never seen her crying before, had never seen such sadness in her eyes. She didn’t turn away or try to stop the tears; instead she looked strangely at peace. For a moment she closed her lids, pale and unprotected compared to the blue that caked the rest of her face. Sanjeev felt ill, as if he had eaten too much or too little. (149)

The characters are intermingled in the situation that neither they can leave their own culture nor they fully practice religion and tradition prevailing in the new land where they now belong.

SouthAsian/Indian Americans carry the pains and nostalgia regarding their existence. Not only the first generation but the second generation or the children born over there also have longing for their original identity rather than live like a refuge over there. The characters are traced between two identities; one of their past and another of their present as naturalized citizen. Infact, they are not both. There is a clear view of cultural and personal isolation. The characters most often compares their home with everything starting from food, dresses, cultures and people’s behavior. With time they even try to locate their places. The characters in living in between are more miserable and marginalized for diaspora. Even they find a confusing situation regarding their own ethnic and cultural identities. They are rather nostalgic and

homesick. They even are haunted by the feeling of exile. They lack the sense of belonging and communication as well. They are concerned not only with vast world but with their love and loved ones. The incidence of Eliot seeing Mrs. Sen putting vermilion powder describes this situation, “But now one day Eliot saw her standing before the bathroom mirror, solemnly applying, with the head of the thumbtack, a fresh stroke of scarlet powder, which she stored in small jam JAR: “I must wear the powder every day, for rest of the day, that I am married” (117). The women maintain cultural life even though they are living in diaspora.

Diaspora is a Greek word derived from the verb diasperio in 5th century BC. It's a movement of the people from homeland to other land which may be caused voluntarily or forcibly. Originally the term was used for Jewish immigrants forced into Babylonian exile after the collapse of the kingdom of Judah (587 BC). But since 1960, its meaning spread to the point where now applied to migrants of every kind regarding the diaspora of Africans, Armenians and the British. Jewish people conceived their scattering as arising from a cataclysmic event. It had traumatized the group as a group as a whole which created the central historical experience of victimhood in the hands of the cruel rulers. Palestinians were later added to this group without complete consensus. In 1980s onwards as Saffron argued, diaspora was developed as ‘metaphoric designation’ to describe different categories of the people- ‘expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities tout court’. The term was also designated to locate the vast array of people who either applied the term to themselves or the label was conferred upon them.

Similarly, Robin Cohen, in his *Global Diaspora*, claims:

By the turn of the century, the current phase of consolidation set in. The social

constructionist critiques were partially accommodated, but were seen as in danger of emptying the notion of diaspora of its analytical and descriptive power. While the increased complexity and deterritorialization of ideas are valid phenomena and constitutive of a small minority of diaspora (generally those that had been doubly or multiply displaced over time), ideas of home and often the stronger inflection of homeland remain powerful discourses. . . . The phase of consolidation is marked by a modified reaffirmation of the diasporic idea, including its core elements, common features and ideal types. (1)

Regarding the history of diaspora, William Safran's article "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return" was marked as most influential one. Not only regarding Jewish diaspora but also many other ethnic groups were experiencing analogous circumstances due to difficult one from their places of homeland and limited acceptance in their settlement. For him, members of diaspora retained collective memory of "their original homeland idealizing it committed to the restoration of the original homeland" (86). They continue to relate variously their host land to their own. According to him the members of the expatriate minority community or the diasporas has such features such as: They or their ancestors have been dispersed from an original 'center' to two or more foreign regions; they retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland including its location's history and achievements; they believe they are not and perhaps can never be fully accepted in their host societies and so remain partly separate their ancestral home is idealized. It is thought that, when conditions are favorable, either they, or their descendants should return; they believed the members of Diasporas should be committed to the maintenance or restoration of the original homeland and to so it's safety and prosperity; and they continue in various ways to relate to that homeland

and their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity are in an important way defined by the existence of such a relationship (Safran 88).

In *Diasporas*, Stephane Dufoix clarifies, “Diaspora has become term that refers to any phenomenon of dispersion from a place; the organization of an ethnic, cultural or religious community in one or more country; a population and over more than one territory; the places of dispersion; in a territorial space where exchange take place, and so on”(2). It deals with the meaning more than the idea of displacement and maintaining the connection with a real or imagined homeland. Today, “Diaspora” builds and forming to links between people by weaving guiding threads spreading across tens of thousands of miles and shine like a familiar and the labyrinth of others(3).

However, since 1990s it came into such fashionable label with about 30 ethnic groups, declaring themselves to be diasporas. Safran and others collectively support diaspora experience as a certain kind of trauma and exile experience. Though this kind of definition tends to ignore the existence of many other migrants who act like diaspora, they suggest that diasporas can be defined by three main elements: dispersion in space; an orientation towards the 'home land'; a boundary maintenance vis -a-vis a host society, however in some cases the segment of people who live outside the ethno-national homeland might be also a diaspora. The determinant factor that shapes the diasporic identity is homeland orientation. Bahar Baser in her *Diasporas and Homeland Conflicts: A Comparative Perspective* writes diasporic communities have the potential to play a significant role in homeland and hostland policies as well as a role in the international arena as non-state actors thanks to their transnational networking capacities. Presently in diaspora there is a strong bond between alienation, home, nostalgic aspect, memory and other concepts of root origin.

(12) As regarding to previous notion of diaspora there had been many controversies within the scholars. The main thing that determines the diasporic aspect is the orientation of homeland wherever it had been described. The concept of alienation and nostalgia occurs due to the absence of the native culture and the language in host country where they actually do not belong. This feeling of loneliness can create many kinds of problems mentally mostly the rise of negative thinking which makes them uneasy in their mind within themselves. They tend to seek for their identity and oneness in the completely different land where they do not belong. They even suffer with the language and identity problem. They are unhabituated with the culture and lifestyle prevailing over there. This lack of oneness is caused due to the dispersion from the origin land.

Regarding the motto or the prospection of the dispersal of people from one land to other they are classified into different groups. Sometime it occurs forcefully and sometimes voluntarily. Victim diaspora lies in forceful migration where the immigrants are banished from the country as the punishment to something wrong they happen to make during their living in that country. It's imposed by the nation's law and order. And in some case if the nation is conquered by other the people are victimized to leave. If the people are enslaved, this also results in such type of diaspora. Some migrate to another land with the motives to spread their business. Some migrate to the new land conquered by their own nation with the higher motives to prosper. Some migrate to other land to work and earn their living purpose.

Diaspora, under colonialism has extended to cover or religious commitments and having same sense of 'exile' from a place or state or origin belongings. Its traditional meaning refers to the term associated with colonial experiences and historical condition that leads to the displacement of the people across the world.

According to this theory, it's the concept of forming own culture in the alien land is the special feature of diaspora. It is the outcome generated from the traumatic exile from historical homeland and dispersal throughout many lands. Diaspora has been used to describe the dynamic networking of communities without the stabilizing allusion to an original nation and identity. It has been also used in the studies of race and ethnicity to describe the range of cultural affiliation connecting the group dispersed in anyway. In contrast, on the post 1970s the majority of the emigrants have been skilled professionals, technicians, engineers, doctors and academics who had settled in high paying jobs, mostly in North America. In addition, a large number of temporary workers from South Asia also migrated to the oil producing countries of West Asia.

Regarding all other countries, Indian diaspora has its deep roots in the ancestral land and also makes continuous cultural links. It is seen as an integral part of the Indian culture and civilization where ever Indians have immigrated along with socio-cultural baggage. The process of formation of Indian diaspora is characterized by four broad patterns in terms of history and cultural economy. Emigration that began in the 1830s to the British, French and Dutch colonies. Emigration to the industrially developed countries during the post-world war II period. Emigrants to the west Asia during 1970 and 1980s. Emigration of the software engineers and the other professionals since mid-1980s to developed countries.

Despite some limitation of specificity of the concept of diaspora, it is gainfully employed in the analysis of emigrants and settlement of people beyond the boundaries of homeland. Indian diaspora, retention of the cultural identity in the host society is another important parameter. There has been the considerable literature on various diasporas such as the Chinese, African and Caribbean besides Jewish. Similarly,

theresearch on overseas Indianare also carried out under notion of diaspora studies.

Most of the literature on Indiandiaspora relates to Indian migration, their socio economic and cultural experiences, experience of adaption and assimilation in the host societies. Indian diaspora is the highest comparing all other countries. Over 15million migrants are living abroad as reported by UN population Division. Due to the largest number of migrants abroad that the country receives the largest amount of remittance, noted to be688.91 billion dollars. Among all other countries United States of America was noted to be the top destination for the migrants all over the world in2015, with 46.6 million migrants moving to US which is 51percent of the total refugee population comprised of the people under the age of 18 years. TheIndian diaspora is comparatively young population, and high level of them for academic achievements and economic patterns set them far above US averages and most other groups inRockefellerFoundation. The Indian and Egyptian diasporas had the highest levels of professional or managerial employment among the 15 group in the RAD series. The Indian diaspora in the United States is highly educated and economically successful population which has integrated well in United States with the maintenance of strong ties with the homeland. They are called to be Indian Americans or Indo-Americans over there.

The researcher mostly considers the lives of the FemaleIndian Americans regarding females. As the authors own experience of diaspora in the foreign land she chooses to write relating to Indian diaspora in her literary works. Her parents were firstly immigrated to Britain where she was born and moved to America when she was two. They never feel like a citizen over there. In an interview with morning edition, she says, “They’ve lived here for more than half of their lives,and they raised a family here and now have a grandchild here. It has become their home”, says Lahiri

“But at the same time, for my parents, I do not think either of them will ever consciously think, ‘I’m an American’”. Her parents were always isolated from mainstream American culture. They were “betrayed by their accents” despite the fact that they spoke English. They didn’t mix with her friend's parents in an easy, comfortable way not because they didn’t want to, but because there was a barrier that they could not overcome. For her creating characters who struggle with the immigrant experience has helped her confront the truth of her life. She says she has learned to accept that her parents will always be tied to two different parts of the Earth. About her mother she says, “the accent, the fact that my mother wore traditional clothing that marked them immediately as soon as we went out in the public sphere.” In growing up Lahiri’s loyalty to her parents conflicted with her desire to fit in: It didn’t matter that I wore clothes from Sears; I was still different. My name was different, she says “I wanted to pull away from the things that marked my parents as being different.” Likewise, in her short stories collection *Interpreter of Maladies* her characters are intermingled between two cultures prevailing in two countries; one of their origin and other from new society. They, on the one hand try to establish a new periphery on the other hand cannot leave the previous one in which they are born and grown up. Indians are strict with their culture where ever they go around the world. They love their culture and ethnicity more than anything else. Even in the strange land they try to follow their rituals and traditions. They are seen awkward in regard to their neighbors where they cannot maintain such friendly relations like in India. The characters more often recollect a memory of their origin country. Especially females are recollecting their past even if they are busy with their house hold works.

The characters in Lahiri’s story seek for the identity which makes them different to those around them and themselves as grouped as diasporas. It portrays the

conflict in them such as struggle with interpersonal relationship and stress of daily existence. They carry the motives that even in the extreme circumstances relationship can be sustained or even grow stronger. They are the means or representative figures who straddles the line between two cultures in *The Third and The Final Continent* Malla's husband asked her:

"what did they give you to eat in the plane?" (191)

To him she answers "I didn't eat" (ibidm)

All the way from Calcutta?" (ibidm)

She answers "The thought of eating an ox' tail made me lose my appetite" (ibidm)

Through their relationship we can explore the ideas of isolation and identity, both personal and cultural. The characters also deal with the crisis of identities which are tied to their inability to reconcile their own identity with American identity. Stories are traced out in accordance of characters mood concerned mostly with the displacement, failure and sometimes success of Indian emigrants in America. Lahiri's work flourish both male and female characters, who being displaced, struggle to survive in the new and unfamiliar surroundings.

Diaspora is the particular ambivalence that hurts the idea of the nation, the language of those who hurts the idea of the nation, and the language of those who write to it and the lines of those who live it. It is an ambivalence that emerges from a growing awareness that, despite the certainty with which historians speak of 'origins' of nation as a sign of the 'modernity' of society, the cultural temporality of the nation inscribes a much moral transitional social reality.

The characters here; in the selected stories too have ambivalence feeling and behavior in the totally different nation where they belong now. They transferred there in order to have the higher attainment of livings. Even they tried to settle in the new

surrounding their nationality hunts them frequently. They even suffer from identity crisis and dislocation. Therefore, even if they were tilted towards American culture, they frequently are pulled by their original culture as well. They cannot totally forget their love towards their nation, homeland.

The characters are largely Indians or Indian-American and their stories together point an evocative picture of Indian's Diaspora. It can be seen as modern short stories with the possibilities of multiple interpretation on various cultures, traditions and customs. Here the author clearly shows how the characters encounter with the native culture, where they neither adopt nor totally ignore the align culture. We can trace the multicultural elements and psychological conflicts.

Similarly, in Mrs. Sen's, a professor's wife tries to be self-independent and for mostly tries to handle two works at a time. The lady chooses to be a baby sitter of an eleven years old boy, Eliot after school. The story is narrated in the Eliot's tone where he meets an Indian couple from the distinctly varying culture. He is amused at the beginning by seeing their livings, customs, food and behaviors. But within the story he slowly starts to adopt all. He learns to enjoy typical Indian food such as; pakoras and fish cooked in traditional way. In the land with no one to talk with and share ideas the lady finds the boy more like a friend. She shares the agony sometimes with her. She says "My sister has had a baby girl. By the time I see her, depending if murseb gets his tenure, she will be three years old. Her own aunt will be stranger. If we sit by side on a train she will not know my face" (Lahiri 122).

In the foreign land the emigrants suffer with so many problems, they miss the people of their country. They miss the newly born their relatives to whom they cannot recognize with in several years of time neither they can. Then, it results in the fragmentation with in their relationships. The lady frequently tries to please boy's

mother with the traditional foods she knows to make but every time it's not praised. She said to it: "It's very frustrating"(123). The lady dislikes all her workings besides being thankful. It is very painful for the lady in the strange land when her visitors never seem pleased with her every effort. She rather loves the boy and takes some shakes and tiffin for him when she goes to pick him in the school which was not compulsory. She feels pleased when the fish market called up for fish to insist: "Isn't that nice of him, Eliot?" (124). Beside her strange surname the man could easily find it her number in the telephone diary. She amuses by that there was only one Sen in the diary and says, 'do you know how many Sens are in the Calcutta telephone book?' she talks about fish, Sarees, Letter and pictures with the boy who only seems as his company in the America.

She complains some kind of dissatisfaction with her relatives as such; "Send pictures', they write, "Send pictures of yours new life.' What picture can I send?"... "They think I live the life of a queen, Eliot." She looked around the blank walls of the room. "They think I press buttons and home is clean. They think I live in a palace"(125).

As regarding to the relatives of the emigrants, they usually think that their persons are highly enjoying their lives abroad. They seem regardless with their problems. They seem to be concerned with their problems. They only seem concerned with their high livings and comfortable life styles.

In the same way, "This Blessed House" conveys the intimate idea regarding the religion and culture in America. The couple has recently shifted in their new house in Hartford inhabited by the foreign family before. Twinkle seems extremely delighted with the paraphernalia found throughout the house. She found the unopened bottle of malt vinegar and white porcelain effigy of Christ, might the same size of

vinegar bottle. But her husband orders her to check the expiration of the vinegar and to throw the other thing. He says, "Check the expiration and at the very least get rid of that idiotic statue"(136). He seems totally regardless to his wife's concerns. But Twinkle urges to keep it with them as they may worth something. She recently places it at the top of the fire-place mantel. By the end of the week in addition she finds a 3D postcard of Saint Francis done in four colors, taped to the back of the medicine cabinet and a wooden cross-key chain, which Sanjeev had stepped on with bare feet as he was installing extra shelving in Twinkle's study. There was also a framed paint-by-number of the three wise men, against a black velvet background, tucked in the liner closet. Also there was a tile trivet depicting a blond, unbearded Jesus, delivering sermon on a mountaintop, in one of the drawers in the dining room.

Sanjeev, her husband is recently selected for the position of vice president with a secretary of his own and chosen people working under his supervision still arranging the books recalls his college days. Even in the foreign land he loves to go to one of his favorite Indian Restaurant to order Mughalichicken with spinach. Twinkle seems more excited to discover, a larger-than-life-sized water color poster of Christ, weeping translucent tears the size of peanut shells and sporting a crown of thorns rolled up behind radiator in the guest bedroom to which Sanjeev has mistaken for a window shade. She says to him, "oh he must, we simply must put it up. It's too spectacular"(139).

On the one hand, Twinkle seemed so delighted with the objects but some things irritate her husband. Being born and raised in Hindu culture he no more likes to see such religious objects which never belonged to their own. He seems aggressive in the idea where his wife wants to keep it as the decorative objects. He says to her, "We should call the Realtor- Tell him there's all these non-sense left behind. Tell him to

take it away"(138).

She even says that the house was lucky for them regarding the things and paraphernalia found here and there in the house. She says to Sanjeev "Face it, this house is blessed" (144). She even mentions it to other girlfriend in California in praise for the people who lived before in that house:

"Highly devoted people", She was saying, pausing every now and then to exile. "Each day is like a treasure hunt. i am serious. This you won't believe, the switch plates in the bedrooms where decorated with scenes from the Bible. You know, Nohas Art and all that. Three bedrooms, but one is my study. Sanjeev went to the hardware store right way and placed them, can you imagine, he replaced every single thing. (141-142)

She is a type of a person who was easily excited and delighted by little things, crossing her finger before any remotely unpredictable events, like tasting a new flavor of ice-cream, or dropping a letter in a mailbox, the quality Sanjeev cannot understand. As she was newly married to him four months ago, there was at so many things to learn about her. His wife even discovers a plaster Virgin marry behind on overgrown forsythia, at weekends before the party. She tells to put it outside for the lawn but Sanjeev is furious about this, he says to her, "All the neighbors will see they'll think we're insane" . . . .We are not Christians" (146).

He even ignores this as his office co-workers could to see this on the lawn. Twinkle, who is completing Master's Thesis at Stamford is astonished by her husband as he seems so reluctant to other people think about. When he says he is going to take the statue to the dump she informs him "Do not you dare"... "I hate you". She even insists that the house was theirs together so both have right there equally. She even starts to burst on tears, to which Sanjeev cannot tolerate. However, at the end they

compromise that the statue will be placed on a recess at the side of the house not obvious to the passersby, but is still clearly visible to all who came. All the visitors in the house will party have a view of discover age, which Sanjeev did not want. But Twinkle keeps showing her guests and is admired the way that they listen how she discovered it. Sanjeev mostly hate those objects due to their dignity, solemn beauty and due to his wife's love towards it.

The couples are seen religiously and culturally in the entirely new land where they shift in a new house. As being a Hindu, the husband seems more nostalgic to the objects they found in their house. The previous residing Christians left over religious hiding in some sense. As a child, Mala is overwhelmed by discovering them one by one. She wants to keep them in their living room as a decorative element. But her husband denies strictly and fears for the reason that they were Hindus. Her concern of interest does not worth of penny to her husband. She struggles and argues so many times for her little demand and finally a compromise is made which saves their relation.

Similarly, in “The Third and Final Continent”, Mala, a Bengali newlywed lady travels to America where her husband resides. Her husband has a full time job in the processing department of library at MIT so he obtains a sixth-preference green-card over there. The story is narrated in his view of perception. As a new Indian guy emigrated from Britain he finds many differences in this country. He for mostly learns how to save and to be involved with the people over there. A bond of relation is seen with the tiny, 103 years old house owner named as Mrs. Craft yet bold and clamorous disregarding the fact of her strict nature. She seems like a kind of friend who makes him relevant to the surrounding over there. She renders him as a punctual and asks for timely payment saying: “you’re punctual!” the woman proclaimed "I expect you shall

be so with the rent!"(178).She complains about the boys who rented before for not paying in time who still have dues left. The lady as taking to each and every time proclaims that there was American flag in the moon to which she herd in radio. To her response she forces him to say: "say 'splendid!'"(179)She is the one to whom Mala is introduced as the previous house owner.

Mala is a typical Bengali woman 'with a typical customs as a newly married one; an iron bangle on her wrist, and applied vermilion powder to the part in her hair, to signify the world that she is bride. Her husband hardly knows her during few days'company after their marriage: "Something inevitable, but meaningless at the time. So little did I know her that, while details of her face sometimes rose to my memory, I could not conjure up the whole of it" (189).

By this we can trace out the cultural aspect of the Indian tradition where the marriages are fixed by the seniors of the house. Yet remaining unknown to each other a person gets married. They consider it's the right of the parents to choose their daughter-in-law or son-in-law. They keep their culture alive even they are highly educate or live in the highly developed surrounding. For them love for the family is the most important thing.

The condition of the Indian house in the foreign land is reflected in the incident where the narrator sees a lady in a sari is dragged by the dog. Even the owner of the dog apologizes to her but the sense of humiliation and unproductiveness haunts her badly. Being Indian he feels sorry of the lady. The narrator takes his wife in concern, makes his mind to teach her everything over there: "It was my duty to take care of Mala, to welcome her and protect her. I would have to buy her first pairs of snow boots, her first winter coat. I would have to tell her which street to avoid, which way the traffic come, tell her to wear the sari so that the free end did not drag on the

footpath" (190). His newly wed wife even cover her head by the free end of her sari. She seems ritual in her every deeds to that her husband's even tries to change by saying: "There is no need to cover your head, I said "I do not mind. It does not matter here" (190).

In regard to culture and food habits in America Indian culture totally differs even they are settled over there. The Indians like more spicy food, deep-fried and roasted. In Bengali tradition fish as compulsion. They prefer handmade food rather the food from outside. Moving to the unfamiliar surrounding they also have effect in their food habits as well. Here, in the story too Mala travels all way to America without having anything in the plane: "The thought of eating an ox's tail made me lose my appetite" (191).

Mala, a serious lady who seldom laughs, is seen laughing after hearing husband saying 'splendid!' in response to Mrs. Croft. Besides Mrs. Croft scrutinizes her from top to toe and announced her as a perfect lady. With the visit to Mrs. Croft the distance between the couple lessens more although they were not fully in love. They together explore the city and met other Bengali over there, with whom they still remain friends. They discover the man named Bill sold fresh fish in prosper street and the shop in Harvard square called Credulous sold bay leaves and cloves. They walked to the Charles River in the evening to watch sailboats drift across the water, or has ice-cream cones in the Harvard Yard. In order to document their life, they buy an Instamatic camera, so that they could send pictures to their parents. In demise of Mrs. Croft then narrator mourns where Mala is only to console him in the unknown continent.

The concept of diaspora is seen regarding to their nation as they visit Calcutta every few years, bring more drawstring pajamas and Darjeeling tea. They have a son

born over there who is in the Harvard University for whom his wife, Mala weeps at night and to console her the narrator says that with the parents together in the third and the final continent their son is not alone.

Diaspora sets many influences on people considering feeling of nostalgia, psychological trauma, dislocation of culture and tradition problems in families and relationships. Disregarding the fact that they prosper and have sound earning diaspora haunts badly that they can't sustain in their country and work in their own land. People go through different prospect of their mind regarding to the migration to the new land where they do not belong. They eventually seek for their identity as well. They can neither stop to recall their past land nor can move completely with the new one.

In short stories collection of Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*, there is a prospection of diaspora of Indian people in the new land, America. The characters are brought up in the entirely different cultures and tradition to which they now belong. The first generation as well as second generation are haunted by the identity crisis and dislocation of culture. There is a stress between two at a time which they try to balance. They cannot totally deny their previous culture with which they are made nor can adopt new one completely. So there is always the condition of cultural conflicts. The notion of one intersect other. Thus, one can get easily traumatized in new nation where they have been emigrated. Considering to the gender, females are more likely to get traumatized. In this blessed house, Sanjeev says to Twinkle: "Oh god, Twinkle, please, I didn't mean it". He has never seen her cry before, had never seen such sadness in her eyes (149). They are weak in nature and cannot persist things more easily. Therefore, they suffer more in comparison to males. Being female to be in entirely different land is a challenge itself. In comparatively females need more care, affection they are more likely to be bound in the tradition as well. They suffer from

homesickness badly and frequently recalls their family, friends and relatives. In context to the housewife in new land, they seem to be more concerned with their friends and relatives in their past country: “Mala no longer drapes the end of her sari over her head, or weeps at night for her parents, but occasionally she weeps for our son” (197). The female protagonist Mala is so helpless in the land where she travels to be with her husband. She is badly missing her parents and people in the country she left behind. Though she is lucky enough to have a supportive husband like Sanjeev she is seen helpless in rest of her day while he is busy at his work.

As regarding to Mrs. Das, she belonged from the second generation of Indian American. The protagonist of the story lives in New Brunswick with her husband and three children. Her husband Raj teaches science in the middle school over there. Despite the fact born and raised in the same country, she is married at young age with her lover is seen so much lonely and desperate housewife. The relation with her husband is no more the same after her first child birth. She then happens to make a mistake having a relation with her husband's friend from Panjab. Due to the mental alienation and frustration with in the periphery of her house she cannot protest against him which resulted to the birth of a baby boy. The lady on the tour to the sun temple in the Konarak in India reveals all the secret to their driver Mr. Kapasi as she learns that his job was also to interpret the people in the doctor's clinic hoping to get the remedy for her mental alienation. To her surprise she couldn't get any remedy from him but feels somewhat relief from the stress. She urges for the remedy again and again during their private conversation in the taxi saying: “It means that I'm tired of feeling so terrible all the time. Eight years, Mr. Kapasi, I've been in pain eight years. I was hoping you could help me feel better, say the right thing. Suggest some kind of remedy”(65). But the driver is totally astonished by her problem so he cannot say

anything to her. The lady for eight years has kept the secret within herself not sharing it even with any of her friend or to her husband fearing of the destruction of their relationship. She complains to the situation and also to her husband who had no time for her. As a desperate house wife she is totally helpless. She finds no one to share her feelings:

As a result of spending all her time in collage with Raj, she continued, she did not make many close friends. There was no one to confide in about him at the end of the difficult day, or to share a passing through a worry. Her parents now lived on the other side of the world but she had never been very close to them, anyway. After marrying so young she was over-whelmed by it all, having a child so quickly, and nursing, and warming up the bottles of milk and testing their temperature against the wrist while Raj was at work. Dressed in sweaters and corduroy pants, teaching his students about rocks and dinosaurs. Raj never looked cross or harries, or plump as she had become after the first baby.(63)

The lady is totally depressed of the fact that one of the child is not from her husband. It's the cause of the guilt and pain which makes her suffer more, inwardly. She is afraid of sharing it to anyone else. Thus, it led her to more suffocation. Though, she clearly knows that she is not only responsible for all these incident she cannot console her mind. She is afraid even with her husband who still is in her love, though he didn't had time for her. This leads the lady suffer more psychologically which could even lead to mental illness one day: "About what I've just told you. About my secret, and about how terrible looking at my children, and a Raj, always terrible. I have urges Mr. Kapasi, to throw everything I own out the window, the television, the children, everything. Do not you think it's unhealthy?"(65)

After all the lady finds to confess her problem. She chooses their guide as a right person to hear her. She is in trouble so she needs somebody to help her. Therefore, expecting some remedy she reveals all her secret with him. The suffocation that was increasing by the years is now confessed to somebody who is really unknown far from their living to which the guide wants to suggest to go through mutual conversation as honesty is the best policy.

In conclusion, this research deals with the Indian immigrants mostly females who are fighting to adjust in the foreign land with psychological trauma. There is a huge difference in their culture, language and daily activities in foreign land in comparison to Eastern one. Especially females are bound on household activities and with low sense of perception suffer to deal with new one in foreign land. They remain lonely mostly when their husband move to work and are mostly haunted by the cultural dislocation and binding with people in their original land. The writer portrays the characters with scare of cultural dislocation and discontentment like Mrs. Sen, Mrs. Das, Shoba and Mala in this text.

There have been vast differences in cultural traits, living habits, food and marriage etc. This research tries to meditate on the characters from Boston and Bengal. Women in the stories are seen confused, alienated and dislocated. They are dislocated as they are neither in the new land nor in the left land. The conflict between new and old culture makes them more confused. The characters are especially from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; all of them have eastern roots and values. They are often trapped in dislocated positions as they often ask themselves where they belong to and who they are. They moved far away from ideological, rational as well as their national values. They are much concerned with the past nostalgic values.

Like Mrs. Sen, the characters in the stories highlight the ceaseless effort to

meaningful life in American cities. She is under alienation besides her husband's support and care and she feels like being in the alien society as her husband does not care her emotional needs and sufferings. Even she supposes herself as a bird in a golden cage. As she belongs to Kolkata, she has unusual craze fish which have been seen as significant taste in her culture. The characters like Mrs. Sen and Mala put vermillion on their forehead and wear saris as their effort to keep their identity of Hindu woman preserved.

In the title story, Mrs. Das encounters the haunted loneliness and guilt she has been hiding from her husband that her second son was not from him but from his friend. The loneliness and indifference of her husband towards her, her emotional needs resulted in such a contrary situation. She continually feels tired and in the condition of withdrawal after having babies in her early age. Even she does not have support and care from her family and friends in the alien city. Her choice of sexual closeness to another person may be the result of her effort to overcome the situation. But that mistake makes her Indian psyche leads her to live with huge psychological burden throughout her life. In the story, she happens to confess about this to her guide Mr. Kapasi. She supposes that he is an interpreter and thus, right person to share all her suffering she is bearing since her eighteen. She feels terrible with the secret and has the urge to throw away everything one day. She wants suggestions and remedies to get out of terrible situation.

Lahiri interprets the sorrows and suffocation of the Indians in the new land where they actually do not belong. Here, in the four stories, this researcher has focused to study women condition as the condition that is far worse than the condition of men. The characters try to balance between homes and abroad but they fail to do so in most of the cases. They bear two identities – Indian and non-Indian, but they fail to

trace out their true identity. They bear fear and anxiety abroad. They cannot be cut off from their parental land. The analysis above presents the evidence that women suffer more in foreign land and they feel so alienated that they even cannot share their emotional sufferings to their husband or let it go.

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