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**Identity Location Rift: Transnational Imagination's Response to National
Morphologies in Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Desai's *The Inheritance of
Loss***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English for Approval of the
Research Committee**

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Letter of Recommendation

The dissertation entitled “**Identity Location Rift: Transnational Imagination’s Response to National Morphologies in Ondaatje’s *The English Patient* and Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss***” has been conducted by Chandra Mani Chapagai under my supervision and guidance. I hereby recommend the dissertation for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

The thesis entitled “**Identity Location Rift: Transnational Imagination’s Response to National Morphologies in Ondaatje’s *The English Patient* and Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss***” submitted to The Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Chandra Mani Chapagai has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research work observes the identities of the characters in Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*. Such identity is affected by the involvement of the nationalism's morphologies. Conversely, the response of transnationalism problematizes the national identity. This conflict between nationalism and transnationalism eventually leads to an identity rift. War, desert, Almasy's blurred unconscious, narrative techniques implied in *The English Patient* boost transnational imagination's reaction to the nationalism which directly affects the major characters' identities. The loosening of local-global binary and the presence of transnationalism from above and below blur the national territories thereby inviting flux in characters' identity in *The Inheritance of Loss*. However, the nationalism's traces cannot be erased totally from their identities. No matter how much the characters tend to conceal and forget their national identity they are either reminded by others or conscious in themselves of their nationalism by the end of the novels. Such presence of the two opposing forces; nationalism and transnationalism ultimately creates a rift in their identity.

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Chapter: One

Nationalism and Transnationalism: An

Introduction to *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss*

The present research is a study on the rift in identity caused by the play between national morphologies and transnational imagination by deriving the examples of the characters in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*. In simple terms, identity is a product of various aspects of the human life like culture, race, gender, geography, rituals, religion etc. Among these components of identity, nation and nationalism are often found related to one's belongingness to certain locality. This locality in turn determines the identity of an individual. However, such a naïve connection of identity to nationalism has been questioned by different concepts like diasporas, hybridity, cosmopolitanism, post-nationalism, transnationalism etc. Due to such questioning, national identity dwindles between threats posed by above mentioned perspectives. These perspectives weaken the connection of nationalism to identity by interrogating the validity of national morphologies like territory, people, culture etc. These components play different roles in identities of the characters in *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss* in national and transnational contexts.

Taken as an entity grounded on or shaped by national morphologies, identity has almost lost its solid bedrock of nationalism due to a regular threat posed by transnationalism by transgressing the territorial, cultural and economic dimensions of the nation. This situation eventually causes a rift in the identity of the characters. They feel divided in between nationalisms calling to its morphologies and at the same time faces the threats posed by transnationalism.

Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* is set on the background of Second World War. The different but major four characters Hana, Kripal, Carravaggio, and Almasy as the central characters find a common villa to live in after German army leaves the place. The Italian villa, devastated and deserted by German soldiers, is later inhabited by Hana, the Canadian nurse, and her considered English patient who is burnt beyond recognition. Hana has lost her father in the war and has already aborted a baby due to harsh situation of war. Such loss of father and the child along with a life among the victims of war in camps has made herself a patient with wrecked emotion. On the other hand, her English Patient has an inconsistent consciousness. He drifts in and out of consciousness. Meanwhile, there enters in the villa a Canadian thief, punished with a blame of spying for Allied Armies. He was caught sometimes during 1942 and his thumbs were cut to leave him wear glove rest of his life. He later on reveals the true identity of the English patient. The next important character in the novel is a sapper, Kripal Singh, originally from India who has got a job of dismantling the bombs and mines set by German armies. The story is a collection of patches of the different imageries and the memories of the four characters put together. The desert, maps, plane crashing and the diaries along with a history book by Herodotus come from the side of Almasy. Kip hoisting himself up a rope, lighting flare after flare to gaze at a fresco of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba; his memory of India, dismantling of bombs, Hana's life among three men at villa, time at the villa, stories told in flashbacks are the different patches to make a plot of the novel.

This story, spun in a deserted Italian villa, connects the rest of the world in a form of their/the characters' retrospection. This web created around the villa and the characters for John Domini in his review of *The English Patient* in *Harvard Review* is a "novel of war and regeneration, of fragile growth and brute blasting away,

[and it] has the impact of a masterpiece: it strives to redeem an entire bomb-shocked century” (219). It is widely read and interpreted as a novel/ story of war that implies a severe criticism of war through the depiction of destroyed lives of people and the countries as well. John Domini adds , “The novel-the fourth by this gifted Indian born Canadian, and winner of England's Booker Prize- Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* (1992), an antiwar novel, opens in 1944 in an isolated Tuscan villa in central Italy devastated by the war” (219).

Following the destiny of the characters in the deserted Italian villa and their past as an important part affecting their life at present, the novel creates a wide space for the study or observation of their confused identity which in fact is the result of the play of the locations. The characters seem to be detached from their past and the nation remaining indifferent to national elements. At this situation, the villa is a symbolic space for them to defy the national entities or the root itself. They make a society in the villa that is neither Indian, nor Canadian or Hungarian. The villa despite its location at Italy does not impart any Italian color in the life of the characters. The villa is like a transcendental space for them. However, this situation does not last long since their nation or nationalism is evoked in them one way or another during their stay at villa. Hana is reminded of Canada, Caravaggio reveals the truth of Almasy thereby taking him back to the war, desert and most importantly to his belongingness to his country Hungary. Kripal keeps remembering his nation, India time and again. Therefore, this is a situation in the life of the characters where the national morphologies are made passive/silenced by the transnational situation while at the same time the transnational identity too is challenged by the diasporic situation of them. And, the ultimate result of this situation is the rift in the identity of the

characters in the novel which is consequently accepted or realized by the characters at the end.

Similar to the issue of the identity rift in the *The English Patient*, the characters from *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai too suffer this situation. Kiran Desai's 2006, Man Booker Prize winner novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, (2006) come along the line of a debate between national and transnational roles in the formation of identity. It exhibits a rift in identity as experienced by the characters in Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient*. Desai's characters, however, unlike Ondaatje's characters, feel such rift within their country while some of them do it across the national territory.

The Inheritance of Loss has the stories of the rich, poor, expatriates, Indians, Nepali, Hindu, Muslim and many others. Amidst these various faces, every face has a challenge to create his/her own place or authority that would come from their identity. Their attempt to create their definite identity takes them to different place, situation and the turnings in their life still the novel ends without giving a fixed identity. Their attempt to form their identity on the basis of national morphologies is shattered time and again by the challenges of transnational situation that works both from below and above. Transnationalism from below is created in America in the life of the characters including Biju and in India, to Gyan while transnationalism from above is created in the life of Noni, Sai, Jammubhai etc. who are always haunted by the nation beyond territory.

Kiran's characters live in a kind of uncertainty. They are directed and instructed in many ways by the nation. Whenever they try to conceive a radical action, they enter into a situation of conflict. Some of the characters are living their lives on borrowed dreams. Biju's father lives in illusion. Biju's father and Lola are the two

major characters who despite their living in their nation; happen to live abroad in their imagination. They are diasporic within their country. America enters into the life of the father through Biju while BBC and London enters into the life of Lola through her daughter who works at BBC. Similarly Jammubhai's wife too lives beyond her nation since Britain in her imagination hovers to shatter her identity forged by the national morphologies. Sai is also affected by the life of her parents in Russia who died there in an accident. All these characters exhibit how one while living within a national territory happens to live beyond the nation with transnational identity. It can also be termed as diaspora within the nation.

The most affected identity is that of Biju who lives as an illegal immigrant and seems to be a criticism of the globalization in him. *Shubha Mukherjee* reading this aspect of Biju in "*The Inheritance of Loss – The Biased and Unfair Globalized World*", writes, "No doubt, people from different countries have settled in alien nations but their hearts and souls are left behind in their far off motherlands. Physically they accept the situational change but emotionally they hate everything alien" (40). Biju tries to hide his duplicate identity even from his father and sends the letters filled with the stories of success. In America, he realizes the inferior position of the Indians. So, he starts to feel ashamed of his identity as an Indian. At the same time, he also creates a deep hatred towards the westerners. He contemplates upon his identity. "Biju couldn't help but feel a flash of anger at his father for sending him alone to this country, but he knew he wouldn't have forgiven his father for not trying to send him, either" (82). Thus there remains no choice for him to regret in either cases.

Along with these, there are other instances in which one can clearly feel the influence of transnational situation in the characters' identity. Jemubhai and Sai are

heavily influenced by the western education system. Sai has been educated with an eye to the West by her parents while Jemubhai, educated in Cambridge University, faces a cultural trauma during his education in England.

The novel therefore is a huge space for one to study the conflicting battle of the Indian morphologies and the western influence in the process of their identity formation. However, the characters have embodied both the aspects thus resulting into an acceptance of the rift in their identity caused by this battle. These two novels open a need to make a thorough discussion of the issue of identity related to national and transnational grounds raised above.

Identity has been believed to be grounded on the nation one belongs to. To follow this belief is to conclude that nationalism forms an identity of a person. However, the concept of nation and nationalism in itself has many complexities in it regarding definition and nature. All these complexities are evident in various definitions ranging from nationalism in sixteenth century, the beginning of the formation of nation-state, to the present era of globalization and transnationalism.

To begin with a very concrete and simple definition of nation in a classical manner, Anthony D. Smith in his book *National Identity* defines nation as “a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members” (14). Smith figures out the territorial and cultural along with demographical, historical/mythical and legal elements as the only sources for the formation of a nation. This ‘ideal type’ definition of a nation is revised later on by him in his next article, “When is a Nation?” where he defines nation as “a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs” (15). The significant revision he has

made in this definition is his realization of the problem with the use of the word “mass” in his earlier definition. Population as a “mass” seems to contradict with citizens endowed with cultural, legal and historical consciousness. This difference between ‘mass’ and ‘citizens’ marks a difference between a state which is overlooked by Smith in these definitions. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, The Gorkha revolution in India is a better example of how mass alone cannot make a nation. Gyan and other Nepalese in Darjeeling and Assam come to confront the cultural, legal and historical consciousness of India which tempts them to create a sense of Nepali nationalism in India. Thus nation is not a mass of people rather people who share a common cultural, legal and historical background and consciousness.

Nation should not be used interchangeably with state. Pointing to Smith’s failure to see the difference between nation and state, Guibernau in his book *Nationalisms: the Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twenty-first Century* writes:

By including citizenship as one of the features of national identity, he [Smith] is assuming that this is exclusively associated with the modern nation-state. To consider this point further, we should examine what Smith refers to as the external and internal functions of national identity. For him the former comprise territorial, economic and political functions while the latter refer to the socialization of the members as ‘nationals’ and ‘citizens’ through media and education (Smith 1991: 17). Smith defines national identity as quality shared by the citizens of the state and he completely ignores that, in many cases, nation and state are not coextensive. (131)

Smith gives a single term nation for both state and nation-state defining the former as the external functioning of nation depending on territorial, economic and political

sectors and later as the internal process of socializing of the people through a common public culture. Unlike Smith's treatment of identity as a product of internal and external functioning of a nation, Guibernau draws a clear distinction among 'nation', 'state' and 'stateless'.

Guibernau uses nation to “refer to a human group conscious of forming a community, sharing a common culture, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future and claiming the right to rule itself” (47–48). The territory in a nation is fixed by the cultural and historical consciousness of the people living in a community. It is more a feeling than a territory while nation state is more a territory than a feeling.

In a nation state, the cultural artifacts of the human beings are homogenized by a state that assumes the legitimate use of force thereby creating a community through territory and legal and political factors. Guibernau defines the nation state as “a modern institution, defined by the formation of a kind of state which has the monopoly of what it claims to be the legitimate use of force within a demarcated territory and seeks to unite the people subject to its rule by means of cultural homogenization”(131). While nation without state, according to him refers “to [the] territorial communities with their own identity and a desire for self-determination included within the boundaries of one or more states, with which, by and large, they do not identify” (131-132). In nations without states, the feeling of identity is generally based on their own common culture and history which often goes back to a time prior to the foundation of the nation- state or, to employ Smith's theory, to its ethnic roots, the attachment to a particular territory and an explicit desire for self-determination.

Population has always remained at the center of almost every definition of nation or state. People's situation and position in a certain locality or territory and their cultural and historical interest help the theorists to define nation and nation state differently. Walker Connor revives the issue of 'mass' in his definition of nation and national identity in order to trace the difficulties faced by the scholars about the role of mass in the formation of nation and the national identity. In his article, "When Is a Nation?" he writes:

A key problem faced by scholars when dating the emergence of nations is that national consciousness is a mass, not an elite phenomenon and the masses, until quite recently isolated in rural pockets and being semi or totally illiterate, were quite mute with regard to their sense of identity(ies)[...] and very often the elites' conception of the nation did not even extend to the masses. (159)

The origin of nationalism has an inextricable connection with the process of consciousness in the masses that ultimately took a form of a community later on developed in form of a nation and nation-state at the present. The nation state is a concept of an elite group and their phenomenon that in most of the cases remains away from the illiterate and semi-literate masses living in rural areas. But the confusion lies in a fact that the modern nation state is a contribution of no other than the masses themselves. Therefore, as Connor argues, the scholars of nationalism and national identities are bound to face this ironic situation nation state with the nation and the masses.

Grounding on the argument of Connor, the lives of the four characters in *The English Patient* exhibit a situation of nation without state where they completely ignore the territory and form a different community of their own despite their

different national and historical backgrounds. Similarly, the Nepalese in Gorkha revolution in India too prove that nation can exist without the sense of state or in a distanced state.

Arguing on the line of Connor, Ernest Gellner emphasizes the distance between the high culture of elites and the low culture of the masses in regard to the concept of nation and nation-state. For him, despite being minority in number, the elite culture erupts up the laymen's or the commoners' culture and represents the nation. Gellner in his book *Nation and Nationalism* argues:

In the characteristic agro-literate polity, the ruling class forms a Small minority of the population, rigidly separate from the great majority of Direct agricultural producers, or peasants ... Below the horizontally stratified Minority at the top, there is another world, that of the laterally separated petty Communities of the lay members of the society... Even if the population of a given area starts from the same linguistic baseline—whichever often is not the case—a kind of culture drift soon engenders dialect a land other differences. (10)

Nationalism is a construction of a culture consented or accepted by the majority of the people regardless of the fact what majority of the people belong to this culture.

Gellner finds the nation as a coercive concept. Nationalism for him “emerges only in the milieu in which the existence of the state is very much taken for granted” (5).

Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin of Spread of Nationalism*, defines nation-ness as “the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our times” (3). Legitimatization of politics is a process of homogenizing the various cultures to one with the ruling high culture of the elites that ultimately represents the nation itself.

The more the nation advances in its form, the more complexities it has to encounter with. These complexities may arise from culture, ritual, history, religion and many others. In order to maintain the pace of advancement of a nation from pre-industrial to industrial to the industrial economy, the nation has to follow more coercive policies which tend to homogenize the differences. Such homogenization further strengthens the root of a nation state. Summing up such spirit of the discussions by Gellner and Anderson, Leela Gandhi in her book *Post-Colonial Theory* writes:

Anderson and Gellner, in particular, defend nationalism as the only form of political organization which is appropriate to the social and intellectual condition of the modern world. Gellner attributes the emergence of anti-nationalism to the epochal ‘shift’ from pre-industrial to industrial to industrial economies, and argues that, as forms of social organization become more complex and intricate they come to require a more homogenous and cooperative workforce and polity. (104)

Leela Gandhi’s study of Anderson and Gellner is critical about the nation-state since it as a social organization seeks more homogenizing social forms. In order to minimize such coercive force, she longs for the revival of notion of nation and nationalism. Steven too observes the homogenizing nature of nationalism in his book *Nationalism* and writes, “Nationalism repudiates civility and the differences that it tolerates by attempting to eliminate all differing views and interests for the sake of one vision of what the nation has been and should be” (17). Nation thus “represents an uneasy balance of tradition and innovation” (19). Nationalism veils or melts the differences existing in the community and creates a single culture among differences.

Innovation has to be suppressed so that a tradition can be carried on. Tradition always backs up the nationalism. Such exclusive nature of nationalism can be interpreted as a project of bringing the common among many people and communities which makes a single community called nationalism.

Ernest Renan calls nationalism a product of soul principle and common history shared by a number of people. For him, nation is not a sole product of its morphologies; rather it is an invention of soul principle and common history. This is what takes along everything of a territory together and forms a nation. Nation as he observes in his essay “What is a Nation?” is “a coming together over time of previously distinct populations that have much in common; it implies a bounded territorial community of custom and law” (18). Nationalism thus brings the different people together in a certain territory by underlying the common grounds of them that forms its own customs and law. However, nationalism is not a clear entity to define in a theory and definition. Due to the complex and varied morphologies of nation, nationalism often creates ambiguities in its definition.

Nationalism is an ambiguous concept. Observing the ambiguous nature of nationalism, T. Nairnin her book *The Break- Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* writes:

[...] the substance of nationalism as such is always morally, politically, humanly, ambiguous. This is why moralizing, perspectives on the phenomenon always fail, whether they praise or berate it. They will simply seize on one face or another of the creature, and will not admit there is a common head conjoining them. (348)

The ambiguity of the nationalism occurs on the level of morality, politics, and humanity and so on.

The theme of nationalism comprises of a basic theme of family and friendship which occurs through the exchange of goods, people and resources. The post-colonial cultures transfer and mimic images of other cultures which for Jameson as Karen Har-Yen Chow concludes it as a late twentieth century postmodern culture. Chow in his article “Asian American Transnationalism in John Woo's *Bullet in the Head*” writes, “As Fredric Jameson argues, late twentieth century postmodern culture is one of simulacra which are reproducible and which often render the 'original' image untraceable” (381). Simulacra ultimately dismantle the theme of family and friendship thereby dismantling the theme of nationalism as well. Articulations of cultural nationalism, also couched as ethnic nationalism, are enacted within but also outside of nation.

Nationalism works with the national images which sometimes affirm but, most of the time, break down cultural boundaries. However, it is always a problem of dilemma of choosing or prioritizing one between personal and communal to a person. Personal here, encourages one to ignore the territorial limitations while communal stands for the national feeling in person. In “Asian American Transnationalism in John Woo's *Bullet in the Head*, Karen Har-Yen Chow writes:

Every nation has its own set of visual images which it culls into its body of national art. These images function to solidify national pride and identity. Yet, the international circulation of such images can both solidify and break down cultural boundaries. The anxieties over national affiliative identities become enacted in the moral dilemmas of individuals who must choose to prioritize communal and personal loyalties or self-gain to aspects of traditional

nationalism, such as an autonomous governmental authority, a national flag, anthem, and other traditional icons of nation. (368)

Such a dilemma of an individual regarding the anxieties of national identity resulting from its conflict to the personal aspect or freedom leads to the weakening position of nationalism's morphology.

The concept of nationalism discussed above by the theoreticians as a solid form, fashioned with the national elements like population, language, law, culture, territory or the soul principle and common history, is under a threat posed by globalization or transnationalism. Despite these attacks in nationalism from globalization and transnationalism, nationalism has not lost its aura. Examining the position of nation and nationalism in the age of globalization, Rumini Sethi in her book *Myths of the Nation* writes, "[...]nationalism has not lost any of its rigour not withstanding globalization; it has acquired, in Ernest Gellner's words, a 'new intellectual ambiance'"(Preface xii). The fluidity in identity does not end the process of nation. She, in "Fixity and Resistance", argues, "Despite the fluid notion of identity, the idealization of cultural myths and models is an ongoing process concomitant with the persistence of the demands for an exemplary nationhood" (198). Such a seemingly disorder in the national morphologies are subject to the new form of order where "We are confronting a transitional nation-state, as seen amply in 'nationalistic' pre-dependence literature, collides with the ambition to join the 'new world order' or the era of globalization" (Preface, xi). The world in this new order is ruled by the ideologies of free market and open society however "[i]t is clear that locality, identity, representation, and nationality cannot be altogether sacrificed to the concept of a 'borderless' world ruled by the ideology of 'free markets' and 'open societies'" (198). Nationalism, in root, still holds the identity of the people. Seth's

argument on the favor of the relevancy of nationalism in the present world has to stand the criticisms put forward by the concept of transnationalism which yokes itself with globalization, migration, cosmopolitanism etc.

Whenever the discussion of the nationalism enters the age of globalization and post colonialism, it catches the spirit of criticism not only in its definition rather in the identity formed on its basis. Despite different arguments on nationalism as a single and solid form and a sole source of identity, the perspectives of transnationalism that shatter the single definition of nationalism and its role in the formation of an identity. In the transnational age, the national identity no longer remains a fixed and solid one rather frees itself from the grasps of national morphologies.

This notion of nationalism receives criticism from post-national formulations and circulations of goods and people. Chow notes:

a group of critics who have deconstructed the concept of nationalism. Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha, and other critics have deconstructed nationalism as an imagined group bond; identity should account for transnational and post-national formulations and circulations of goods and people. Such a call is not simply academically generated. (371)

Deconstructing nationalism claiming it as an imagined community further helps one question the fixity of nationalism. Nation now is not bound to its certain morphologies like people living in a territory and following a certain symbolic pattern prescribed by a nation. Nation now can move across these symbols and morphologies since it is just a matter of imagination.

Transnationalism in simple term can be understood as the movement of the people, the immigrants across the border of their state. Marking the beginning of

transnationalism, Victor Roudometof in his article “Transnationalism, Cosmopolitanism and Glocalization” writes, “It emerged in the 1990s as a new concept aiming to describe the situation of relatively recent immigrant cohorts” (115). Transnationalism on surface can be reduced to the changes caused by the contemporary technological inventions and their applications and exclusively to the contemporary international migration. Roudometof adds, “The emerging reality of social life under conditions of internal globalization or glocalization is what should be properly understood as transnationalism” (117). Social life in transnational situation is affected by internal globalization or the mixture of the local and global culture. Transnationalism in this sense is always yoked to the forces of globalization. Globalization further weakens the territorial boundaries of the nation-state.

Nation-states during Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries had their focus on nation building process itself. Nation-building process took the territorial boundaries as the very essential elements which formed bedrock for a concept of nation and nationalism. Victor Roudometof writes, “state control over boundaries is a feature of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the universalization of passport controls and other surveillance mechanisms through which states were able to effectively police their borders is a 20th-century phenomenon” (119). However, the boundaries always do not control or sum up the morphology of the nationalism. In contrast to the Twentieth century belief of nationalism as a product of territorial boundaries, “transnationalism came into existence at that moment in time when successful nation-state building ‘contributed to the creation of large numbers of people “out of place” – that is, crossing over the national boundaries erected in the last two centuries” (119). Boundaries in the age of transnationalism are melting or weakening and migration is an opaque cause for such attacks on the territorial boundaries of the nation state.

Transnationalism as defined in terms of migration of the people from one nation state to the other nation state alone cannot carry its complex dimension. Along with the migration or exchange of the people from one boundary to another, a culture migrates to mingle with the different culture and creates a state in life that cannot exactly be defined as confined to one territory. Such forms of the flows “can extend into other spaces, including spaces of transnational sexuality, popular music, journalism, as well as spaces fostering the construction of a multitude of identities (ranging from those based on gender to those based on race, religion, or ethnicity)” (119). Unlike the concept of transnational communities, transnational social spaces, “are constructed through the accelerated pace of transnational practices that become routine practices in social life. Such practices do not necessarily involve international migration” (119). The simple definition of transnationalism as an act of moving from one territory to another is further complicated with the involvement of the socio-cultural and economic factors in it. Since national morphologies like territorial, social, cultural and economic factors tend to shape the identity of the people, the transnational identity gets subjected to a threat posed by the national morphologies themselves.

National morphology always confines the concept of identity. Every identity is a subject to the transnational situation regarding the time and space of the nation since both nation and identity are the products of imagination. Notions of identity and nation always become imagined entities as Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin of Spread of Nationalism* argues, “nation is an imagined political community, and an imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (154). Since nation is a confined and imagined territory, and so is identity. No nation and identity is coterminous with human beings and their trans-fixation. So,

nationalism as morphology is fatally arbitrary where identity is rendered into political ideology that understands nationalism with, Gopal Balkrishnan in *Mapping the Nation* argues it as “the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which- as well as against which- it came into being” (98). So, nationalism in relation to identity-location rift is not only transfixing but trans-bordering phenomenon.

Similarly, Partha Chatterji in *Nationalist Thought and Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* argues how national morphology confines the individual and national potential time-space continuum, and fails to address the issue, “Nationalism . . . seeks to represent itself in the image of the enlightenment and fails to do so. For enlightenment itself, to assert its sovereignty as universal ideal need in other; if it could ever actualize itself in the real world as truly universal, it would in fact destroy itself” (17). This is how national morphology rules over people, breeds prejudices by offering some sort of epistemological reliability that are potential to self-peril.

Similarly, national terrain garners ideological ambivalence resulting paradoxes and confrontation that necessitate the idea of nation and renders it to the arbitrary and contingent historical invention. In other words, nation becomes merely a cultural signifier, as Gellner argues:

Nationalism is not what it seems, and above all what it seals to itself . . . the cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical invention. Any old shred would have served as well. But in no ways does it follow that the principle of nationalism . . . is itself in the least contingent and accidental. (56)

So invention of nation or nationalism is just a contingent and accidental notion.

Nationalism breeds prejudices and is discriminatory as in the segregator instance of gender issue. In other words, nationalism is gendering phenomena that

recondite identity of individual beneath its fissures and cracks, as annihilation of national space by Woolf who does not consider her nation to be hers- as national space- caught in the terrain, but takes the entire world as her abode, as transnational response to national morphology that is gender unfriendly as, Virginia Woolf in *Three Guineas* argues:

Therefore, if you insist upon fighting to protect me, or “our” country, let it be understood, soberly and rationally between us, that you are fighting to gratify a sex instinct which I cannot share to procure benefits which I have not shared; but not to gratify my instincts, or to protect either me or my country. As a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world.

(201)

This is the level of annihilation to national morphology and acceptance of transnational status. So, national morphology is confining poetics in individual and national time- space.

“Nationhood’s sense”, as Paul Giles urges in his article “Transnationalism and Classic American Literature”, “emerges from a negotiation with and partial suppression of transnational frictions and disturbances” (66). He further adds, “[the] conception of the nation-state tends[s] to remain, characteristically, in flux” (68). The identity in its essence is filled with fluidity but nationalism tends to suppress the heterogeneous aspects of identity in order to solidify the identity. In fact, nationalism relies on a very weak ground created by homogenization of the diverse aspect of a nation-state.

Arguing on the same line Frederic E. Wakeman in “Transnational and comparative research” argues about the loose bonding of nationalism created out of its

morphologies like people, wealth and territory which can easily be altered by a wave of globalization. Frederic E. Wakeman suggests that the “‘loosening of the bonds between people, wealth, and territories’ which is concomitant with the rise of complex networks’ has altered the basis of many significant global interactions, while simultaneously calling into question the traditional definition of the state” (86). The questioned state cannot be a ground for a solid nationalism rather infects the national elements with the nature of flexibility and uncertainty.

Transnationalism is not always necessarily an economic enterprise. It equally encompasses the politico- socio cultural issues. Highlighting this aspect of transnationalism, Alejandro Luis E. Guarnizo Portes and Patricia Landolt in “The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field” note, “while the original wave of these [transnational] activities may be economic and their initiators can be properly labeled transnational entrepreneurs, subsequent activities encompass political, social, and cultural pursuits as well” (14). Transnationalism obviously has its roots on economic and immigration expansion as in the beginning. However, it has become a socio-cultural and political issue at present.

Transnationalism’s socio-cultural aspect may accompany with the global capitalism. Both modes of transnationalism as abstract i.e. socio cultural and sometimes as materialistic i.e. global capitalism come together or separately. Nonini and Ong in their article “Chinese transnationalism as an alternative modernity” are critical about the creeping dilution of research by a cultural studies approach “that treats transnationalism as a set of abstracted, dematerialized cultural flows, giving scant attention either to the concrete, everyday changes in people’s lives or to the structural reconfiguration that accompany global capitalism” (13). Transnationalism is neither a

pure dematerialized cultural flow alone nor solely the materialistic global capitalism. It occurs on both cultural and economic levels.

Transnationalism has its own methodology to understand the multiple sites of activities including concrete/ material, abstract, and cultural. In other words, it can be termed as the multi-sited ethnography which offers a good space for researchers to study transnationalism. "This method", as George E. Marcus in "Ethnography in/of the world system: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography" argues, "involves tracing a cultural formation across and within multiple sites of activity' by way of methods 'designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations'" (105). This method revolves around the different aspects like chains, paths, threads, and conjunctions etc. as part of the national morphologies to complicate the cultural and territorial locations of the nation.

While criticizing nationalism and its morphologies, transnationalism happens to dismantle the identity based on nationalism. Identity as a product of nationalism is always subject to change since national ground for it is made so weak by transnational elements that identity unlike a fixed and solid entity floats in the ever changing transnational situations. The conflict between national and transnational morphologies ultimately creates a rift in the identity of its subjects.

Transnationalism in itself is a process of liberating people from the limitations or boundaries of a national territory. Instead of defining transnational identity as a creation in imaginary third space, unlike Bhabha, it is located in a space created by transnationalism that still has spatial mobility but with strong social ties exchanged across national boarder. Parting away from Bhabha's idea of third space, Luis Eduardo Guarnizo Michael Peter Smith in *The Locations of Transnationalism* argues:

Grounding Transnationalism Transnational practices do not take place in an imaginary “third space” (Bhabha 1990; Soja 1996) abstractly located “in-between” national territories. Thus, the image of transnational migrants as deterritorialized, free-floating people represented by the now popular academic adage “neither here nor there” deserves closer scrutiny. Intermittent spatial mobility, dense social ties, and intense exchanges fostered by trans-migrants across national borders have indeed reached unprecedented levels. This has fed the formulation of metaphors of transnationalism as a “boundless” and therefore liberatory process. (11)

A transnational identity favors the cosmopolitan that opposes the local culture. Cosmopolitan by its nature is assertive of transnationalism while local cultural is stick to national morphologies. People these days are taught by transnational cosmopolitan culture to reject the local culture and rejoice an identity forged beyond national morphologies. Examining the opposite nature of local and cosmopolitan culture, Appadurai writes, “For classical modernist theory the local, as opposed to the cosmopolitan, is conceived as a bounded “property or diacritic of social life” (179). In this light, the local is seen as a derogatory site that compounds backwardness, as the realm of stagnation against the dynamism of the industrial civilization of capitalism, as the realm of idiosyncratic culture at odds with scientific rationality which Dirlik in “The Global in the Local” defines, “as the obstacle to full realization of that political form of modernity, the nation-state” (23). These two different forms of identities are the product of the conflict between local and cosmopolitan forces and these forces in fact are the grounds for the identity of an individual. By this logic, the

conflict between these two forces necessarily transmits to the identities forged which by formation process itself inherit a rift.

However, it is always a striking question to people whether the national or local forces remain passively silent in the identity formation process of an individual. In this regard, Appadurai argues that “embedded in the contingencies of history, local subjects reproduce their locality (which he calls neighborhood) in interaction with the environment in which it is embedded. This is, in his view, “how the subjects of history become historical subjects, so that no human community, however apparently stable, static, bounded, or isolated, can usefully be regarded as cool or outside [of] history” (185). For him, the locality of a person may be contaminated by the cosmopolitan forces but cannot be erased. A person always creates its locality constituting a history. Therefore, identity is not just a matter of external/transnational forces rather it respects the local forces as well. This situation of its inability to completely erase one in the opposites of nation/transnational or local or cosmopolitan ultimately results into the rift in identity.

Such rift in the identity of an individual is further asserted by the diaspora. Diaspora is a situation created by the transnational movement as Kachig Tölölyan in “The nation-state and its others: in lieu of a preface” terms it Ethnic diasporas and defines as “the exemplary communities of the transnational moment” (5). Ethnic diaspora is necessarily a political situation. Transnational political activities are undertaken by ethnic Diasporas. Robin Cohen in ““Rethinking “Babylon””: iconoclastic conceptions of the diasporic experience” reasons that “Awareness of their precarious situation may also propel members of Diasporas to advance legal and civic causes and to be active in human rights and social justice issues” (13). Since it is the product of transnational movement, diaspora brings mixing both the national and

transnational forces in identity. Identity this way enters into a dilemma of respecting or rejecting these opposites: national/ transnational.

Dilemma of acceptance and rejection is caused by a connection of here (nation) to there (foreign) while a change in one affects the next. Indeed, James Clifford in his article "Traveling Cultures" finds, "The empowering paradox of Diaspora is that dwelling here assumes a solidarity and connection there. But there is not necessarily a single place or an exclusivist nation. . . . [It is] the connection (elsewhere) that makes a difference (here)" (322). Robin Cohen develops Hall's point with the observation that "transnational bonds no longer have to be cemented by migration or by exclusive territorial claims. In the age of cyberspace, a diaspora can, to some degree, be held together or re-created through the mind, through cultural artifacts and through a shared imagination" (516). Diaspora thus can take place within the nation since foreign cannot be blocked territorially in the age of technology and imagination. Cyberspace blurs the territorial boundaries enabling each culture to transgress any demarcation and travel around regardless of national territories.

The decentered subject is not free-floating subjectivity. Rather, the discursive fields through which people travel as they move through life constitute alternative, socially structured bases for the inner tension and contention over selfhood and identity. In this way various "social spaces" like trans-local migrant networks, transnational working arrangements, and globalized neo-liberal ideology, can be viewed as affecting the formation of character, identity, and acting subjects at the same time that identity can be seen as fluctuating and contingent, as the contexts through which people move in time-space change and are appropriated and/or resisted by acting subjects.

Following the discussions above, one can conclude that diaspora as a part of transnational movement, in its core is given a ground by migration process, ultimately dismantles the rigid and solid national identity of the people. The rift in identity is inevitable due to the co-working of transnationalism and diaspora and their nature of bringing many identities in a form of a collage rather than homogenizing them for one single identity as done by national morphologies.

Stepping on “globalization” and the “crisis of the nation-state”, transnationalism encourages the global and local forces to penetrate the national cultural and political systems. Global forces act in form of transnationalism from above and penetrate the national morphologies while local culture acts from below and resists the global forces. In these both process, the national morphologies along with national territory are challenged and dismantled. Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michael Peter Smith in “The Locations of Transnationalism” observe the weakening position of nation-state and write, “The nation-state is seen weakened “from above” by transnational capital, global media, and emergent supra-national political institutions. “From below” it faces the decentering “local” resistances of the informal economy, ethnic nationalism, and grassroots activism” (3). For market policy it can be something celebratory practice but at the same time it creates a cultural hybridity. In more pessimistic readings, these developments are seen as preludes to a new form of capitalist modernization that is bound to convert the entire planet to “global consumerism.”

Coming across all these definitions by different thinkers, transnationalism as a movement has got its impetus on material or economic expansion that either from above or from below happens to blur the boundaries created in nation. However, the extended use of transnationalism at present has got a lot to do with the socio-cultural

issues creeping across such national territories or morphologies. Such kind of subversion of national territory or morphologies is possible only when one finds out the weakening effect of nationalism that leaves a space for transnationalism to get introduced in both economic and cultural factors which directly determine the identity of the people.

After a brief discussion of nationalism and transnationalism and their influence in the identity, the reading of the characters in the novels *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The English Patient* helps us see the reasons behind their confusion regarding identity. The research has been planned in four chapters to study the identity of the characters on the light of nationalism and transnationalism.

This research has been divided into four chapters followed by works cited. The first chapter entitled “Nationalism and Transnationalism: An Introduction to *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss*” explores the basic concept about nationalism and transnationalism along with the simple introduction of two novels by Ondaatje and Desai, *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss* respectively. The diverse and contested nature of nationalism aroused by the concept of transnationalism is presented in a form of a survey of the history of both terms. Nationalism as such has gone through different stages facing the challenges posed by globalization, post nationalism and transnationalism. The naïve definition of nationalism as an abstract concept generated by the combination of certain national morphologies no longer gains its solid validity at present while nation transcends the imposed territorial and cultural boundaries or borders. It deals with the serious issues raised by transnationalism that occurs as a radical response to the basic assumptions to nationalism. With a short survey of the stories of the two novels, the chapter opens a space to read the above mentioned debate in it.

The second chapter is the study of national and transnational issues in two different modes in two different novels: *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss* by Michael Ondaatje and Kiran Desai respectively. This chapter is further divided into two parts each dealing the national and transnational identities of the characters from the above mentioned novels. The identities of the characters in *The English Patient* are complicated by Ondaatje's use of history that deliberately subverts or dissolves the boundaries by countering the existing history. Similarly the desert and the war in the novel erase the individual's national identity thereby again complicating it. Along with these thematic aspects, the novel has also exploited the technique of narration so as to subvert the national boundaries or morphologies. Almasy's unconscious has worked like desert and war in erasing of the national boundaries. However in the second part of the chapter, I have intended to read the national morphologies acting underneath this seemingly subverted transnational identity. Kripal obviously deserts the villa with Anna and returns home it's due to his belongingness to India. Anna keeps remembering her nation at times reminded by Caravaggio.

Desai's characters in *The Inheritance of Loss* undergo two kinds of transnational situations: transnationalism from above and below. Sai, Jemubhai Patel, Loli, Nona, and the Cook are affected by the first kind of transnationalism while Biju, Patel, Saeed; Sai's Parents suffer from identity crisis caused by the later. There is a unique transnational situation of the Nepalese in Darjeeling where thereby creating a situation where being in India territorially they forge the Nepali nationalism and Gyan undergoes this situation.

The third chapter is a continuity of the discussion on the response of transnationalism to the identities of the characters from two novels. The chapter

focuses more on the relevancy of nationalism even amidst the responses of transnationalism to the identity. Characters from two novels definitely go through the upheavals created by transnational imaginations. However, nationalism cannot completely be erased totally from their identities. There remain the trances of nationalism in such rifted identities.

The fourth chapter “Acceptance of the Rift in Identity” is the concluding part of the dissertation that compares the identity rift of the characters in both novels where the characters are dwindled between national and transnational morphologies. However, by the end they seem to accept the identity location rift one way or other.

Chapter: Two

Identity Location Rift: Transnational Imagination's Response to National Morphologies in Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

The characters in *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss* feel a rift in their identity soon after they realize that the control of the nation of their belonging in identity has been loosened by the challenges posed by diaspora, globalization, transnationalism, war and so on. Moreover, the disjunctive narrative technique used in *The English Patient* and symbols like convent school, desert, Italian villa etc in both novels reinforce or intensify the rift in the characters' identity.

The Inheritance of Loss has two kinds of characters suffering from the sense of rift in their identity. One kind of characters' identity is challenged by globalization (transnationalism from above) and the next group who feel such rift caused by transnationalism from below in a form of local resistance to the globalization. Convent school, war and violence are symbols used to pose threat to nationalism since they blur or dissolve the territorial and cultural boundaries.

On the other hand, Ondaatje's *The English Patient* has a strong sense of transnational threat to the characters' identity. By the use of the disjunctive narrative through Almasi's messy unconscious, where the narration shifts from present to past uninformed and frequently in a form of his dim memory, Ondaatje seems to challenge the coherent history which ultimately weakens the concept of nationalism lying heavily dependent on history. As a result of such a chained/extended attack on history to nationalism, the identity formed of national morphologies receives a shake on its pillars/ grounds. War and desert along with the Italian Villa are other prominent symbols intended to further dismantling of the geographical/ territorial and cultural

fixers in their/ characters' national identity. Moreover, the characters are often diasporic of their situation, for instance Kip longs for his country in particular and east in general and thus happens to discard Anna's care for him. He, in the end, heads homeward being unable to forget home but with a reality that villa and Anna are going to haunt throughout his life. Caravaggio, Almasy and Anna too live with rifted identities dislocated somewhere in between their home country and the Italian Villa.

***The English Patient* and Transnational Threats to National Morphologies**

The English Patient subverts the national identity through its narrative, and the use of symbols like war, desert, and Almasy's unconscious. The characters in themselves are the real evidences how nationalism fails to shape an identity of an individual. Almasy, Hana, Kripal, Caravaggio etc. live life far away from the territorial and cultural boundaries of their nations. Similarly, the symbols are strong enough to melt the boundaries set around nations while the narrative, on the other hand, directly attacks the backbone of a nation: its history.

Counter History and Subversion of the National Boundaries

Ondaatje's act of subversion of the existing or canonical history in *The English Patient* can be read as his step to reject the concept of rigidity of nationalism and identity generated from it. Rigidity of nationalism in foremost is bolstered by its official history since history is a product of fixed national morphologies and summed up form of events. Ondaatje seems to blur the line between the role of the scientific historian as a recorder of facts and the poet as the creator of plausible facts.

Ondaatje has presented himself as a counter historian who is in an attempt to write a poetic history. Poetic or literary history is sharply in contrast to the national history as Madhumalati Adhikari, Michael Ondaatje and James A. Michener in "History and Story: Unconventional History in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*

and James A. Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific*” write, “The fiction writer becomes the new historical agent to rewrite history” (48). Ondaatje as a literary historian has a quest for the resurrection of humanity from the ashes of devastation is continued through ingenuous compression and extension of available facts. His act of introducing Herodotus’ history book in the novel is intentional. By bringing it in forms of different memory patches of Almasy, he is questioning the chronology of the canonical history. History now has been shattered in the mind of a character that instead of affirming its facts happens to use it to remember his own or individual past. This act of reducing the official or canonical history into individual one is an attempt to liberate an identity from the bonds of nationalism and transcend it to a free state.

Not only this, Ondaatje has invited the subaltern’s point view in the narration of the story. The story narrated from the colonial viewpoint dramatically alters to the subaltern’s voice in *The English Patient*: the perception is through the victim. Almasy as an agent of colonizer in the beginning of the novel is victimized to narrate the countering history. This twist in narration is to highlight the fact that fictional historians reorganize the uninspiring historical events into something of human interest. Their work suggests a kind of resistance against the “progress” of scientific history. Herodotus’ history as a scientific history loses its grip of human interest and is revitalized by Ondaatje through its presentation/narration.

By making Almasy to narrate the story, Ondaatje intentionally narrates the human/personal history of Almasy rather than the historical facts of his life. The personal history is narrated in chronologically coherent manner while historical facts come in a blurred form through his blurred unconscious or memory. Carravaggio’s query “What happened in 1942?” is answered by a series of facts about his love life and political life. Caravaggio’s statement, “Let me tell you [Hana] a story” (163),

covers the major historical details of Almasy's life. It in a form of prologue to human history disappears and gradually history converts into the fictional history of his love to Katherine. Soon enough, cultural barriers dissolve in personal relationships. This shift from history to personal relationship is suggestive of personal freedom rather than the national or cultural morphologies which in fact is very closer to the effect of globalization and transnationalism. For Almasy, his relation to Clifton is much more related to his identity than his belonging to any country of culture.

Identity for Almasy is so personal affair that it is no longer important that he is a Hungarian who had assisted the Germans. He has lost his root to bind him to Hungarian territory. He is an “English” man for Hana while a “brother” for Kip. It is significant that the "English patient" is faceless, and that he has lost track of political history. His personal history survives in bits and pieces. Madhumalati Adhikari, Michael Ondaatje and James A. Michener further arguing about the contribution of excluded personal histories in historiography write, “Historiography is interested in the principal event constructed by thousands of faceless men, but Ondaatje, by fictionally historicizing the truth of Almasy's life, has inscribed an unconventional history that often remains buried” (49). Countering the history with personal history, Ondaatje is refuting the hold of national history as a sole part to form an identity.

The novel has a concern of four dropouts from the Allied effort living outside Florence in a villa during 1945. The narrative ranges from the silent desert outside El Alamein to the atomic flash over Hiroshima. During this range of narration in forms of patches, these four dropouts are likely to confuse themselves among their identities. The English Patient as a center of such confusion was brought out of the Sahara two years earlier, burned beyond recognition. Despite being former desert explorer, a

brilliant pan-European scholar, his identity remains a mystery for most of the book. His recollection of the memories in an episodic manner has a similarity with other characters in the novel. His love for a colleague's wife is similar to Hanna's love for Kip. The man's traumatic adventures in the Sahara reveal much in common with the espionage work of the fourth character, a former thief mutilated under torture. It is evident in this kind of tunneling that the characters are connecting themselves in order to form a new platform for their identity that definitely not follow or respect the national history or morphologies. Characters are mixing the features of Odysseus and Christ, in particular, and to the Vedic hymns of his Sikh sapper in general thereby causing a blurred situation for them even in the level of myth and religion.

By this, the novelist is playing the role of a poet to dismantle the national history by taking up few of its forgotten or shadowed parts or initiating it with history's this point and gearing it towards the more personal and poetic relations and connections to each other. He makes the use of narration as a weapon to dismantle the chronological history of Herodotus and overshadow it by personal stories. The fusing of real and the imaginary creates an experience of war and they unlike histories provide a vision of history. Such reworking in national history later on concludes it with the defying of the national trances supposed to be in identity. While put together in certain historical frameworks, *The English Patient* procures alternative, timeless and placeless narratives. This is how the narrative of the novel has countered the history thereby countering the national identity in extension.

Desert: A Place to Blur Individual and National Identities:

Desert and the deserted Italian Villa as the major settings of *The English Patient* have helped a lot to the characters to erase their national subjectivity to a larger extent. These settings suggest the evocative ambiguities produced by violent war. They also question the boundaries of the nations. With a disconnected voice Almasy says, "I came to hate nations. We are deformed by nation-states [. . .] I wanted to erase my name and the place I had come from, [. . .] not to belong to anyone, to any nation" (138-139). Almasy's narration and heavily annotated copy of Herodotus scatters with the diaspora. English patient is thus not an English patient but just a dislocated Hungarian explorer, "just another international bastard" (251) who discards national identity and becomes a citizen of the desert.

War and Technology: Cause of National Boundaries Subversion

The foremost weak point of nationalism is that it survives by suppressing almost all the threats posed to it from globalization, transnationalism, post-nationalism, Diaspora etc. Secondly, nationalism is always in flux receiving challenges from the advancing technologies. Furthermore, the growing trend of dismantling of the hierarchies directly does attack the binary's ground to the nationalism.

Technology mocks the national morphologies especially the communities/ boundaries by creating a space for new kind of identity i.e. transnational identity. Giles in his article "Transnationalism and Classic American Literature" finds technology responsible for the loss of nation's control over identity. He writes, "Nations have lost their old omnipotence, the invention of new technology, [. . .] is rendering national communities obsolete. Nations have lost their old omnipotence. ... [W]e go and live where we will" (68). This loss of nation's control over identity has

loosened in people the sense of belongingness to certain territory and culture. They feel free to move anywhere they like and adopt the identity temporarily.

Technology on the other hand plays a vital role in dismantling the fore mostly important element of nationalism that is its territory. Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo and Patricia Landolt in “The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent Research Field” argue, “Though lacking the contemporary technologies of communications and transportation, precursors of present immigrant transnationalism have existed for centuries. Few immigrants actually lived in two countries in terms of their routine daily activities” (224). While most dreamt of going back one day, this long-term goal was countermanded by the concerns and needs of their new lives and, for many, eventually faded away .

Technology also creates a culture of its own that counters the traditionally solidified definition of culture. This newly formed culture is strictly in a bond to globalization and flows with it thereby contaminating the nationalism that grounds on the traditional cultural practices. Gayatri Spivak in her article ““Who claims alterity?”” describes “the discourse of cultural specificity and difference, packaged for transnational consumption’ through global technologies, particularly through the medium of ‘microelectronic transnationalism’ represented by electronic bulletin boards and the Internet” (276). Technology as Spivak believes forms a microelectronic transnationalism through cybernetics which obviously carries the nation beyond nation or brings the out inside nation. Blurring of such cultural and territorial boundaries ultimately puts threats on nationalism. Appadurai and Breckenridge in. “On Moving Targets” comment that ‘Complex transnational flows of media images and messages perhaps create the greatest disjuncture’s for diasporic

populations, since in the electronic media in particular, the politics of desire and imagination are always in contest with the politics of heritage and nostalgia”(iii).

In a similar vein, Bhabha in *Location of Culture* characterizes the practices and identities of transmigrates as “counter-narratives of the nation” which continually evoke and erase their totalizing boundaries and “disturb those ideological maneuvers through which ‘imagined communities’ are given essentialist identities” (300).

Defining nationalism as a product of totalizing tendency of a nation, Bhabha questions the identity created by such nationalism. Transmigrates’ narrative counters the boundaries set by nationalisms and further exhibits the rift in nationalism’s essentialist identity. Such weak position of nationalism is weakened further by technology.

War is a means to blur the boundaries and bring people together to live in a multicultural society. Represented by Italian Villa, war also suggests for the flux nature of the national boundaries. Ondaatje’s fictionalized version of war allows him to capture the need for multicultural existence in the world divested by the war. War defies the self-referential world and brings the different nations along with their cultures together. War also eliminates the differences among people and brings their humanitarian feeling out. Broken by the events of the war, Hana, a Canadian nurse decides to stay with her so-called English patient because "She would not be ordered again or carry out duties for the greater good” (14). The fallacy of the "greater good" had penetrated into her, and yet the war had taught her to nurse suffering humans irrespective of their nation, culture, creed, or race. The need for multiculturalism, even internationalism, is the positive fallout of war. Hana states, “Her war was over” (51). This free- state she achieves is analogous to the freedom she has attained from national boundaries.

War drags people from different parts of the world. The characters in the novel are dragged similarly in the villa where Caravaggio truly realizes it and explains the futility of war in Kripal's life. Kripal's presence in Italy as a sapper jeopardizing his life for the British and the Americans, is an example of how colonial powers used those they colonized. The voice of the "other" (Caravaggio) rightly exclaims: "You are being used boyo . . ." (121). Caravaggio adds, "The trouble with all of us is we are where we should not be. What are we doing in Africa, in Italy? What is Kip doing dismantling bombs in orchards, for God's sake? What is he doing fighting English wars?" (122). War's futility can be one part of study but its nature of bringing people from different parts of the world and mingling them together in such a position/situation that they almost remain unaware about their blurred identity is what carries the project of transnationalism and asserts a different kind of rifted identity of the characters. Carravaggio's inconvenient question raises the problem of natural justice, and in so doing he subverts the mainstream history of English-Canadian-Indian involvement in the Second World War.

The blurring of boundaries underlines the futility of wars. The four shell-shocked humans begin to gather the broken pieces of their lives; the process of reconstruction begins after devastation. The bridges between the countries that had collapsed due to political or national reasons are rebuilt. War does not simply devastate the territorial boundaries but also destroys the human mind equally. In the novel, the war is over for the Allied and the German forces, but the war-ravaged minds and bodies on both sides continue to fight a war that may never come to an end. The historical impact of the war may be removed from people's memory but the cultural and emotional devastation may linger forever.

War in this way has played a role to dismantle the territorial and psychological boundaries or structures. It brings people beyond their territories and forms a collective psyche regarding the traumatic memory of the devastation caused by war. People in this situation are likely to undergo a crucially fragile situation of their identity as it happens to the major four characters like Hana, Kripal, Almasy and Caravaggio.

Narrative Technique and the Subversion of National Boundaries:

To ignore the chronology is to resist the national morphology. Fluidity is closer to transnationalism while order/fixity is to nationalism, and national history is unlike Ondaatje's multicultural history. The narrative of the novel is disruptive and disjunctive which ignores the chronology thereby ignoring the national history and chronology as well.

The novel breaks away from the trend of chronology and moves forward and backward in different pieces as the human memory naturally does it. This technique is fit to present the fullness, complexities, fragmentation, degradations of the human beings during war. The "truth of his fiction" articulates an imaginative account of the past that was not possible except by means of imaginatively constructed, fictive elements.

As the narrative, filtered through Almasy's consciousness, migrates across geographic space(s), his body emerges as another landscape that inscribes a spectral presence. He appears as a pure carbon ghost, "one more enigma, with no identification, unrecognizable" (Ondaatje 95), fully marginalized, disfigured, disassembled, and textualized. The horrifically burned explorer takes on multiple bodies as invented skins, including the "mask of herbs" (8) that gives him "a bearing of grass" (9), the "ointments, or darkness, [pressed] against his skin" (9), the

"green-black paste" made of ground peacock bone (10), and even the "tannic acid [that] camouflages [. . .] [his] rawness" (117). Almasi in fact becomes all borders. He materializes not as a convergence of representative identities but as shared, distributed consciousness. This is again underscored as Almasi conjures himself as Katharine's jackal lover. In an odd transcendence of time and space, the jackal lover called "Wepawet" has accompanied Katharine through her Oxford University days well before the two lovers officially meet in Cairo. Their later relationship, preserved sexually and artistically beyond death in the desert cave, constitutes another peculiar "intimacy [. . .] between the dead and the living" (Ondaatje 170). Thus in the wake of World War II, "there is hardly a world around them and they are forced back on themselves" (Ondaatje 40) wounded, alienated, and disenchanted. War has fractured any illusion of stable national, racial, or ethnic identity, producing the ambiguity of postcolonial identification. Moreover, the reader, disarmed by such spectrally, experiences acute displacements and the disorienting sense of drifting in between.

Ondaatje, too, concludes *The English Patient* with a peculiar moment existing outside linear time and dimensional space: the Indian sapper Kip and the Canadian nurse Hana, long after returning to their respective homes, telepathically connect across literal oceans of difference. Through the ambiguous "shadows of memory" (Ondaatje 172), the novel remains in states of flux that both invites and repels narrative closure. Their metaphorical figures of flight, in harnessing the power of displacement to trouble and destabilize, powerfully challenge what Ondaatje terms "the tremor of Western wisdom" (274). Indeed, Ondaatje presents timeless, placeless narrative that moves well beyond the confines of its pages.

Almasy's Unconscious:

Almasy's unconscious is a place to blur embedded national identities of different characters. These characters are mingled into one and are dragged to one in his memory. His memory ignores/ denies the national morphologies when it particularly defines his own identity along with his unwillingness to admit others nationality. He as a source person for narrative always speaks from memory in his delirium or full consciousness therefore there is an air of elusiveness and indefiniteness in what he says.

Almasy's unconscious transcends time and space. Ondaatje writes, "There seems to be no time here [. . .]. So we will be remembered by others [. . .] a promise of some great future" (280). Such temporal and spatial deferment appears heightened by the presence of the specter such as Almasy, burned beyond visual recognition and floating in a morphine-induced state of semi-consciousness that roams between the worlds of the living and the dead. Somewhat ironically, Almasy inhabits the novel's structural and thematic center; all characters, past or present, move in shifting relation to the mysterious English patient, first passing through his disembodied voice. His is the voice the reader encounters. His is the mediated consciousness bringing Katharine and Geoffrey Clifton, Madox, and the other desert wanderers into existence. Despite arranging past civilizations with *The Histories* as guidebook and organizing his own past through a "well of memory," both preserved in his own reinvented Herodotus text, Almasy the corpse remains the "nameless, almost faceless man" (Ondaatje 52). He has mapped the deserts of Libya and charted the great histories of civilization, yet his own body and identity, routed through fire, fiercely resist such mapping.

His mind thus is a place to bring characters together and blur their identities beyond national territories and cultural practices. His act of defying national morphologies is not just confined within his physical deformity of face beyond recognition, but comes from the depth of his mind; his unconscious.

Characters and their identity rift in *The English Patient*

Nationalism and its morphologies as the parts to constitute an identity of an individual remain always under attack from technology, migration, globalization, trans-localities, loose connection of national morphologies etc. It clearly shows how national identity cannot claim its fixed and rigid control over identity. Identity is a matter of fluctuation and flexibility that is ever changing in nature.

With the effect of technology and invention in a period of loose national territories and morphologies, people are likely to bring nation across to merge or mix it with the imagined morphologies of other nations, thus, producing a hybrid identity/ hybridity/ situation. Hybridity is another way of questioning the root of nationalism. Chow puts it as a practice in global scenario:

The persistence of forms and evolutions of hybridity refute anxieties from both imperialist and nativist positions on the subsuming of one by the other. Rather, these forms participate in a global commodification that generates more production and provides potential cultural sites from which to subvert monopolistic producers. (374)

Hybridity for him accepts the changes of globalization rather than sticking itself to the nostalgic tone of nationalism or nativism. Hybridity thus criticizes the national solidity by extension to the identity formed out of national morphologies as well.

The characters in the novel undergo the transnational situation personally in their life. Caravaggio, Almasay, Hana and Kripal are the major four characters living in an Italian Villa to suffer from identity crisis or rift caused by transnational situation. In short these characters' transnational situation can be briefed individually.

Caravaggio

Caravaggio lives his life in translocality where what matters more for him is the personal sense of revenging Almasay than to relate himself to his nation and the locality created by it. He has almost left every trace of his locality but throws himself into the desert and Italian villa that just ignores his cultural locality and encourages him to be more concerned to his personal or individual affairs than his nation. He takes his profession as the reality of his life than his contribution to his nation during war. He is fighting his enemy than the enemy of his nation. He loves fighting for himself in cost of hatred to his nation. Caravaggio is a character living in the Villa who lives in a transnational imagination. He is a Canadian by nationality but does not take his nation and nationality seriously. He rather foregrounds his profession of a thief when he admits, "I think this is called looting. My country taught me all this" (90). His disbelief to nationality and patriotism further appear in his remembrance, "Here I was a thief. No great patriot. No great hero. They just made my skills official" (37). It's his profession that gives his identity to him as a thief rather than the Canadian nationality.

Relating person and national conflict in individual's sense of identity, Appadurai explains a space called "translocality" created out of such conflicts. Transnationalism aims at creating its own locality called "translocalities". Translocality is a counter location to the national functioning. Such translocalities in fact play a role to dwindle the effectiveness of nationalism. Arjun Appadurai

explaining the formation of translocalities along with its act of countering the local/nationality in his article “The production of locality” writes, “ that many people face increasing difficulties of relating to, or indeed producing, ‘locality’ (‘as a structure of feeling, a property of life and an ideology of situated community’)(14)”.

“This”, he reckons:

is due not least to a condition of transnationalism which is characterized by, among other things, ‘the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement’ and by ‘the steady erosion of the relationship, principally due to the force and form of electronic mediation, between spatial and virtual neighbourhoods.’ There have emerged, instead, new ‘translocalities’ (Appadurai 1995, Goldring 1998, Smith 1998). (14)

Translocalities as Appadurai argues erases or tries to erase the relationships and all the ties among and between the national morphologies. Identity as a product of nationalism thus always receives an attack from this position created by the translocalities which in fact is the product of transnationalism itself

More to the individual versus nation conflict to create translocality, Caravaggio has a sense of rift in his national identity caused by war. The support from conflict and war to the technology helps a lot in this project of dismantling the hierarchy of local and global. Giles argues, “how the geographies associated with different cultural identities "have always overlapped one another, through unhierarchical influence, crossing, incorporation, recollection, deliberate forgetfulness, and, of course, conflict" (72). Overlapping of the cultural and geographical identities ultimately dissolves the territories and results into a fluctuation in identity. Hierarchy does not function any longer due to the crossing of cultural and

national morphologies along with the forgetfulness of the people. They mix up morphologies easily and accept the newly formed identities time and again.

Caravaggio has a sense of confusion not only in his own life but of other's as well. War, he thinks, is what creates such chaos by bringing people from different parts to fragile frontiers without respecting any nation. Frontier therefore keeps changing from one nation to another. Pointing to this futility of a war of national identity through war since war is to define national boundaries, he says, "The trouble with all of us is we are where shouldn't be, what are we doing in Italy? What is Kip doing dismantling bombs in Orchards? For god's sake? What is he doing fighting English wars?" (122). The irony lies in those people who in themselves are away from their nation i.e. in transnational position but fighting in war which aims for national boundaries. This ironic situation is responsible to bring a rift in their identity which they call as confusion.

Kripal

The sense of national identity also receives an attack from the literal migration of people from one place to another. The migrants and the transmigrates don't only open different possible versions of nationalism but also forces it to accept its forms completely changed or challenged. Pointing to the effect caused by migrants in nationalism, Katharyne Mitchell in "Different diasporas and the hype of hybridity", *Environment and Planning* observes, "the interest of the state in attracting the investments of wealthy trans-migrants widens the possibilities for new kinds of national narratives and understandings" (106). Migration or transmigration can be the result of search of opportunity, compulsion, interest and coincidence. Whatever the case is, such migration always poses a threat to the nationalism's territory or boundaries.

Kripal is an Indian fighting an English war far away from his nation. He, one day transcends himself from land to the air using his rope in the garden. This symbolically presents his will to go beyond any country be it east or west. Kripal “laced a small hammock of rope around it and after attaching a rope and pulley to the tree branch slowly lifted the concrete into the air” (104). But he happens to listen to the American music, “he pulled the crystal set out of the bag and placed the earphones to his head” (105). One may relate it to his present situation where he has transcended himself away from his country and mixed to the western culture.

Such a diasporic consciousness is explored by Arjun Appadurai & Carol Reckenridge who suggest in their article “On Moving Targets” that whatever their form or trajectory, “diasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment”(i). This trend of the diasporas indeed has backed up the attack made over pure cultural and national identities of the people. It creates a parallel nation in form of transnational communities which germinates its own form of patriotism while people also try to remain loyal to the root countries. Arjun Appadurai in “The production of locality” writes that among transnational communities:

these ‘new patriotisms’ are not just the extensions of nationalist and counter-nationalist debates by other means, though there is certainly a good deal of prosthetic nationalism and politics by nostalgia involved in the dealings of exiles with their erstwhile homelands. They also involve various rather puzzling new forms of linkage between diasporic nationalisms, delocalized political communications and revitalized political commitments at both ends of the diasporic process. (220)

As another important component of transnational movement migrants, like diaspora, accept different identities caused by such rift. Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton-Blanc, raising the issue of migrants in “Transnationalism From Below” write, “While some migrants identify more with one society than the other, the majority seem to maintain several identities that link them simultaneously to more than one nation” (11). Obviously, such acceptance of multiple identities creates a rift in identity. Migrants are origins of the flow of other different resources from one nation to the other. Resources do not just flow back to people’s country of origin but to and fro and throughout the network. Robin Cohen in ““Rethinking “Babylon””: iconoclastic conceptions of the diasporic experience” describes part of this dynamic; anywhere within the web of a global diaspora and writes:

Traders place order with cousins, siblings and kin ‘back home’; nieces and nephews from ‘the old country’ stay with uncles and aunts while acquiring their education or vocational training; loans are advanced and credit is extended to trusted intimates; and jobs and economically advantageous marriages are found for family members.(160)

Migrants, as a basic form of both diaspora and transnational situation, do not only help to transgress the borders but also keep a strong connection to the nation of their origin through the exchange of different resources like money, training, education etc.

No doubt, Diaspora in Kripal is the output of his transnational state and at the same time the blurred presence (discontent, disrupted presence) of the nation.

However, it is his transnational position that leads to his diasporic situation. He is once deaf to the nation and next willing for it. Therefore rift in him is a product of dwindling between transnational and diasporic poles. This half to half identity in him

is suggested in a narration of his sleeping in the tent, “he sleeps half in and half out of the tent” (81).

Kripal is not only physically and culturally translated from Indian to English but linguistically too his name is translated but in a parody form. Here is an issue of this comic situation created during the time of translation, “The sapper’s nickname is Kip. “Get up Kip”. ...It is not a funny situation that creates laughter in readers rather makes one serious about how identity enters into a state of mimicry and mockery. This mockery creates a very small but difficult space for one to place his/her identity over there. Thus, identity helplessly accepts the rift created in it by such mockery.

Almasy

Almasy is an example of how nationalism is just an arbitrary to the subject of identity of the people. Almasy being Hungarian by birth is treated as an English man by people and he himself fails to remember his nationalism or denies to connect himself to any nationalism and replies Hana’s question “Who are you?” as “I don’t know. You keep asking me” (5). It might be his attempt of disconnecting himself from the nation and nationality. In this attempt he even uses the third person to narrate his past. Nationalism for him is a dangerous invention. Beyond nationalism he enjoys to be an international bastard along with Kripal and generalizes their situation when he admits, “Kip and I are both international bastards born in one place choosing to live elsewhere. Fighting to get back to or get away from our homelands all over lives. Kip does not recognize that yet. That’s why we get on so well together” (176). The supposed to be English man who claims himself to be an international bastard at the end is revealed to have Hungarian root. Therefore, he is a man who lives always away from nation; nation does not have anything to do to form (in the formation of his identity.). He is a transnational man.

Almasy himself is never ready to accept the territory. Europe is what he wishes to wash off his body first. He says, “All of u, even those European homes and children in the distance, wished to remove the clothing of our countries” (148). By transcending regional link to boy and identity, he transcends the land as well and calls the place as a “place of faith” (148). He further strongly denies his individual identity given by the nation and wishes, “I didn’t not want my name against such beautiful names. Erase the family names! Erase nations! I was taught such things by desert. . . I wanted to erase my name and the place I had come from... after ten years in the desert, it was easy for me to sly across; not to belong to anyone, to any nation” (148). His newly formed identity does not have anything to do with his nationalism that proves the failure of national morphologies to address the transnational state of the citizens. It also gives a hint that the arbitrary relation between identity and nation can be erased. Insisting the process of breaking this arbitrary relation, he describes, “there were river of desert tribes, the most beautiful humans I have met in my life. We were German, English, Hungarian, and African – all of us insignificant to them. Gradually, we become nation less. “I came to hate nations. We are deformed by nation- states. Madox died because of nation” (147).

Detachment from the nation is not the end. He further explains the reason of it as the evil aspect/ face of nationalism. He “come[s] to hate nations” because he believes “They are deformed by nation states” (147). Nation thus cannot bind one to a territory rather destroys one’s life. Identity beyond nation is what gives truth to Almasy.

Almasy enjoys the Villa that exactly is like his interest of transcending the nation/ nationalism. Almasy’s identity in the Villa is not stick to any nation, he is believed to be an Englishman, he denies connecting himself to any nation and

Caravaggio reveals his nationalism as Hungarian. He, thus, is strong evidence/ proof that nationalism is just an arbitrary belief to identity and identity is beyond nation.

Almasy is talked much by the characters regarding his identity, “Who is he? He asked. We don’t know his name. He won’t talk? The clutch of doctor laughed. No he talks, he talks all the time, he just does not know who he is where did he come from? The Bedouin brought him into Siwa Oasis. Then he was in Pisa for a while” (30).

Hana

After all the concept of the transnational space or sphere sharply contrasts with the national sphere but causing the later crumble without any fixed ground for an identity grounded on it. Solidarity and identity do not rest on transnational situation. Highlighting the challenges posed to nationalism by transnational situation, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson in their article “Beyond “culture”: space, identity, and the politics of difference” contend that “Something like a transnational public sphere has certainly rendered any strictly bounded sense of community or locality obsolete. At the same time, it has enabled the creation of forms of solidarity and identity that do not rest on an appropriation of space where contiguity and face-to-face contact are paramount” (9). Transnational space is a position from where the seeming solidarity of identity can be revealed/ decoded with an exposition of continues fluctuation in identity.

Hana in the villa in herself is like a key of transnational imagination. Villa is her construction since she brings lives to this place after destruction. Villa always remains away from the homelands/nation of the inhabitants over there. Being frequently attacked by Germans, before the arrival of Hana and others in it, it was a fluid state. Being in Italy, it is detached from Italy. They don’t feel it as a part of a nation. Villa is like a transcended land from the world where all of these characters

feel to be safe to remember (sometimes) their arbitrary relation or attachment to their nation states. This remembrance of the past and their nation/country does not have anything to do with their present identity but, rather, sometimes creates Diaspora in them.

Villa then is a transnational imagination that binds everyone away from their nation. Hana holds them. Caravaggio, forgetting his nation, is dragged to this imagination. The English patient who throughout the novel despises nation dies over there. Kripal is lost in it but Diaspora drags him back to India. But this escape is not a real escape since the symbolic form of Villa and Hana along with the English Patient haunts him in India. India as a nation is physically in touch to him but identity is always beyond the land. He has been carrying the villa in his mind that never gets away from him. So, we can say for Kripal it does not matter where he is, at villa in Italy or India, he is always beyond them to an imaginary state developed during his stay at Villa. Nation/ nationalism thus have no holding force in the formation of a person's identity. Hana is that character who in herself does not want any connection to her past or nation. She "wanted Kripal to know her only at the present" (268).

Ondaatje's use of disjunctive narrative technique, deterritorializing symbols and the selection of the characters from different nations, who later on disobey the morphologies of their nation of origin, contribute to a claim that the identities of the characters in *The English Patient* are no longer bounded to the national morphologies but rather they keep on fluctuating as per the change in situations and territories. Therefore, their identity always remains in rift due to their transnational situation which directly reacts against the role of national morphologies in the formation of identity.

The Inheritance of Loss and Transnational Identity

The causes behind the flexibility of the characters' identities in *The Inheritance of Loss* can be observed into two categories: the threats posed to identity by transnationalism from above and the challenges exerted by transnationalism from below. To mention, Sai, Cook, Jemubhai, Noni, Mrs. Sen, Jemubhai's family are the characters whose identity is directly threatened by cosmopolitanism's transnational project from the above while Biju, Jemubhai, Saeed, Sai's Parents, Booty etc. are challenging the national territorial and cultural boundaries from the below. Along with it, there are two mini countries taking shapes across the territory: a Mini India in America where Biju experiences his house and a mini Nepal in India that Gyan witnesses. These two examples present the transnational situation in form of an institution unlike the individual transnational experiences of the characters.

The age long nationalism's agency in the identity formation process of an individual has been questioned with the introduction of transnationalism at present. Transnationalism brings the fluidity out in identity by rendering the failure of nationalism's morphologies. Technology, global capitalism, multiculturalism, transnationalism from above and below, etc. bolster transnationalism in this project of dismantling the nationalism's ground for identity.

Amidst many attacks on nationalism during its weakened period, transnationalism introduces two other ways of dismantling the firm ground of nationalism: globalization and capitalism as an attack from above, and local culture that resists this process of globalization and capitalism as a resistance from below. Whatever ways i.e. as an attack or resistance, these two forces coming to conflict as binaries happen to blur the territorial or cultural boundaries of a nation. Arjun Appadurai puts this situation/ newly formed culture as a result of the conflict as a post

national global cultural economy. He writes, “Transnationalism “from above” and “from below” are ushering in a new period of weakened nationalism, a “post-national” global cultural economy” (Qtd. *The Locations of Transnationalism* 7). Transnationalism from above and below has resulted into outbursts of entrenched, essentialist nationalism in both “sending” and “receiving” countries. In “Transnationalism From Below”, Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michael Peter Smith explaining this fact writes:

In receiving nation-states, movements aimed at recuperating and reifying a mythical national identity are expanding as a way to eliminate the penetration of alien “others.” States of origin, on the other hand, are reessentializing their national identity and extending it to their nationals abroad as a way to maintain their loyalty and flow of resources “back home.” By granting them dual citizenship, these states are encouraging trans-migrants’ instrumental accommodation to “receiving” societies, while simultaneously inhibiting their cultural assimilation and thereby promoting the preservation of their own national culture. (10)

This is really a paradoxical situation when both of them are breaking each-other’s terrain simply by blurring their territories causing a transnational situation but their effort in this process is to defend their own root culture.

Transnationalism is widely conceived celebratory in a sense that it subverts the popular resistance from below. Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michael Peter Smith point out this aspects of the response of people to transnationalism when they write, “Cultural hybridity, multi-positional identities, border-crossing by marginal “others,” and transnational business practices by migrant entrepreneurs are depicted as

conscious and successful efforts by ordinary people to escape control and domination “from above” by capital and the state” (5). Transnationalism is a result of globalization and is caused by the resistance from the below where the commoners/ local forces come to challenge the forces of globalization like capitalism and cosmopolitanism.

Transnationalism thrives in the dissolving of the national cultural and territorial boundaries. Thus, it attacks on the deceptive local- global binaries. Such subversion of the binary often depends on the formation of the political organization of transnational space; the constitution and reproduction of transnational networks through material and symbolic exchange; transnationalism and identity politics etc. Examining these major factors of transnationalism, Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michael Peter Smith define transnationalism as “a multifaceted, multi-local process. A main concern guiding Transnationalism from Below is to discern how this process affects power relations, cultural constructions, economic interactions, and, more generally, social organization at the level of the locality” (6). Removing the ground of binary of local-global from under the feet of nationalism, transnationalism blurs such binary thereby defying the cultural and territorial boundaries. All the power construction and the development of the systems of the nation should be discerned by focusing on the resistance of such systems from the below.

However, transnationalism is not as clear and opaque as people think it to be. There are complex structures and ties of it which cause the differences in its forms. The rapid form of change in peoples living around the world which apparently differs from the territory and national culture bound living, is generally represented by transnationalism. Nancy Foner in her article “What’s new about transnationalism? New York immigrants today and at the turn of the century” puts it, “some groups [and

places] are likely to be more transnational than others – and we need research that explores and explains the differences. Within immigrant groups, there is also variation in the frequency, depth and range of transnational ties” (23). Foner pointing to this complex nature of transnationalism here seriously expects people to realize the vast terrain of transnationalism.

Grounding this fact of blurring of the national walls in identity formation, Biju’s life in *The Inheritance of Loss* can be read as a story of the resistance of the globalization from below. Biju throughout the novel tries to bring the nation across the boundaries thereby creating a transnational situation. He is a character who embodies the cultural forces from the below /local culture/Indian culture and carries it to the USA and it in turn keeps threatening the strong boundaries(territorial and cultural) posed by the USA. Biju has a quest for India in the different parts of the world and asks about it to a Guyanese:

“Where is Guatemala?” he had to ask.

“Where is Guam?”

“Where is Madagascar?”

“Where is Guyana?” (23-24)

Spreading of the Indians in the different parts of the world symbolically suggests the weakening of the local-global hierarchy where local comes strongly but ultimately the boundaries get blurred. Guyanese replies to Biju:

“Don’t you know?” the Guyanese man said. “Indians everywhere in Guyana, man”

“Indians in Guam. Everywhere you look, practically, Indians.”

“Trinidad?”

“Trinidad full of Indians!! Saying- can you believe it?- Open a caan of salmon, maan.”

Madagascar- Indians Indians. (24)

Biju’s bringing of his nation beyond national boundaries or to the global arena is evident in his nostalgic/diasporic feeling invoked by Hindi movies, songs and dances.

Biju relieves his Indian experience in Stone Town with Saeed:

In Stone Town they ate samosas and chapatis, *jalebis*, *pilau rice*...

Saeed Saeed could ring like Amitabh Bachhan and Hema Malini. He sang, *mera jootahai japani*...” and “*Bombay se aayamera dost- Oi!*”

he could gesture with his arms out and wiggle his hips, as could

Kavafya from Kazakhstan and Omar from Malaysia and together they assailed Biju with thrilling dance numbers. Biju felt so proud of his

country’s movies he almost fainted. (60)

This situation of Biju creates a resistance with the blurring of the territorial boundaries between India and America.

However there are instances where such blurring of territories from local culture gets into a confused state normally when the conflict occurs between the Indian and American cultural forces clash to each other. She explains the Indian culture in America or ‘beef’ and says:

You know Biju,” she said, laughing, “isn’t it ironic, nobody eats beef in India and just look at it- it’s the shape of big T-Bone”. ..one shouldn’t give up one’s religion, the principles of one’s parents and their parents before them. No, no matter what. . .those who could see a difference between a holy cow and an unholy cow would win. One who couldn’t see it would lose. (151)

The resistance to the American culture of eating pig is strongly refused by Saeed does not get ready for any transformation but strongly holds Muslim belief and says:

They dirty man, they messy. First I am Muslim, then I am Zanzibari, *then I will BE American.*” Once he had shown his new purchase of a model of a mosque with a quartz clock set into the bottom that was programmed, at the five correct hours, to start agitating: “*Allah hu Akbar, La ilhahailallah, wall ah huakbar. . .*” through the crackle of the tape from the top of the minaret came ancient sand-weathered words, that keening cry from the desert offering sustenance to create a man’s strength, and all through the day, that he might not fall through the filthy differences between nations. The light came on encouragingly, flashing in the mosque in disco green and white. (152)

The forces are imposing their cultural forces in order to make a hybrid Saeed who carries the Muslim culture but in American technologized manner. It neither asserts the American nor the Muslim culture but dissolves them to a new Saeed who programs his Namaj in American clock and reads Namaj in a disco like scenario.

Biju’s decision of returning home from the USA has a strong realization of the world to be in two polarities regardless of the national boundaries. He believes the world will be divided into two parts; one of the rich and next of the poor. This is a post-national consciousness in that Kakkar suggests him to be back to the next part of the world. In a suggestive mood, he says to Biju:

“You know,” he said, “America is in the process of buying up the world. Go back, you’ll find they own the businesses. One day, you will be working for an American company there or here. Think of your children. If you stay here, your son will earn a hundred thousand

dollars for the same company he could be working for in India but making one thousand dollars. How, then, can you send your children to the best international college? You are making a big mistake. Still a world, my friend, where one side travels to be a servant, and the other side travels to be treated like a king. You want your son to be on this side or that side? (295)

Biju as an embodied Indian cultural force has every minute posed a resistance to the American cultural forces thereby dissolving and blurring the prominent rigid cultural practices. During the course, he seems to be assertive or confused between these cultures but eventually it results into the hybridity that disobeys one particular pure culture but rather leads to transnational situation. It has in fact created confusion in his Indian Identity.

Another character to resist the globalization from below is Jemubhai Patel. Jemubhai's identity is contaminated by the western culture and lifestyle. There is a heavy influence of European culture in him. He is an Anglicized Indian judge. Right from the moment of his move to England from India for his studies, he gets into a confusion of his national/Indian identity questioning it many times himself. He makes an attempt to get rid of Indian identity in deck in order to be internalized with the western culture but happens to carry some of it thereby jeopardizing his own pure identity. In deck, he throws the package of banana given by his mother that symbolically represents/suggests how he is putting his national identity in question or crisis by thinking of abandoning it, "Jemubhi picked up the package, fled to the deck, and threw it over-board. Didn't his mother think of the inappropriateness of her gesture? Undignified love, Indian love, stinking, unaesthetic love- the monsters of the ocean could have what she had so bravely packed getting up in that predawn

mush”(43). His confusion peaks up when he finds himself in between western and Indian culture of fork and hand, cake and laddoo and so on. He was really strangled in such confusion:

There was titillation to unearthing the forces of guilt and desire, needling and prodding the results. This Sai had learned. This underneath, and on top a flat creed: cake was better than *laddoos*, fork spoon knife better than hands, sipping the blood of Christ and consuming a wafer of his body was more civilized than garlanding a phallic symbol with marigolds. English was better than Hindi. (33)

While living in England Jemubhai’s Indian nationalism is symbolically subdued or disliked by the English girls. He takes an Indian curry smell to the different streets of England. A sense of threat from below is felt by the English people when they complain his smell and say, “Girls held their nose and giggled, “Phew stinks curry”” (45). He has taken India to England in form of curry smell.

Such a strong smell of nation fades slowly leaving a palemetetic effect in England when he confuses himself more in between Indian and English morphologies. His perception of himself changes, he gets into an inability to decide when he is and fails to choose a way to behave:

Thus Jemubhai’s Mind had begun to warp; he grew stranger to himself than he was to those around him, found his own skin odd-colored, his own accent peculiar. He forgot how to laugh, barely manage to lift his lips in a smile, and if he ever did he held his hand over his mouth, because he couldn’t bear anyone to see his gums, his teeth. . . To the end of his life, he would prefer shadow to light, faded days to sunny,

for he was suspicious that sunlight might reveal him, in his hideousness, all too clearly. (45)

Saeed and Sai's parents are other minor characters of the novel to carry the cultural morphologies from below/ local culture abroad. These cultural morphologies do not act as extension of its pure situation but rather mingle them to the morphologies of globalization/ abroad thereby creating a hybrid identity. Thus, they live a confused or rifted identity. Sai's parents live in Russia, "He had joined a few other candidates in Moscow, and six-year- old Sai had been hastily entrusted to same convent her other had attended" (30). Saeed on the other hand, carries Muslim culture to the USA and performs Namaj in westernized scenario.

Thus they live an identity which is in fluctuation caused by the transnational situation caused by the resistance of the national/local morphologies to the foreign/global factors.

Unlike Biju, Jemubhai, Saeed and Sai's Parents who take the local forces for Indian morphologies to the USA, England and Russia thereby creating a transnational identity or a newly formed hybrid identity that defies the national morphologies, here are other characters like Sai, cook, Noni, Loli, and Jemubhai's wife happen to receive the morphologies from above/globalization that dismantles the cultural boundaries of Indian nationalism. They are either diasporic or transnational through imagination. They happen to live foreign lifestyle while territorially being within a nation. In other words, these are the characters who physically do not cross the national territory but in conscience and lifestyle invite or welcome/ receive the globalization thereby blurring the national morphologies. This is how they live in a transnational situation beyond Indian nationalism.

Transnationalism from above generally functions in the form of different political, social or economic global organizations of transnational spaces pointing to, as Luis Eduardo Guarnizo Michael Peter Smith further suggest, “the growing interdependence of geographical scales. This further leads to the state of deterritorialization and unbounded situation. Undoubtedly, the boundaries limiting people cut across the politically instituted boundaries of nation-states. “But transnational actions are bounded in two senses—first, by the understandings of “grounded reality” socially constructed within the transnational networks that people form and move through, and second, by the policies and practices of territorially-based sending and receiving local and national states and communities”(9).

Resistance and control as two different forces do make shifts in people’s identity. This is a kind of a battle of local and global forces where local wants to keep it sacred while global strives to influence the local. And the result ultimately is the exchanging of each other’s influences to create many out of them. Identity in this situation is subject to fluctuation and drift.

The narratives of Sai’s parents living and death in Russia and grandfather’s living in England have complicated or rifted Sai’s identity. These narratives work as the forces of transnationalism from above in the novel. She is an Indian girl who lives her life in an Indian territory but is heavily influenced by western culture and Russian culture as well. Since her parents lived their years till their death in Russia, the narration of their death in Russia brings Russia in her imagination. Furthermore, she is sent to the convent that introduces her to the western or Christian education system. Moreover, her grandfather lives an Anglicized life style directly inflicting these foreign cultures to her. The narrator tells the role of the narration of her parent in Russia in sending her to a convent school,” it threw her into convent” (29).

Her indifferent nature to Indian culture and of belongingness to western lifestyle can be better read in her reflection of books. Her reading of an international books and magazines helps her to cross the national boundaries and enter into borderless state.

She travels across national boundaries riding on the back of transnational magazines:

Books were making her restless. She was beginning to read, faster, more until she was inside the narrative and the narrative inside her, the pages going by so fast, her heart in her chest- she couldn't stop. In this way she read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Cider with Rosie*, and *Life with Father* from the Gymkhana Club library. And pictures of the chocolatey amazon, of stark Patagonia in the *National Geographics*, a transparent butterfly snail in the sea, even of an old Japanese house slumbering in the snow. . . –she found they affected her so much she could often hardly read the accompanying words- the feeling they created was so exquisite, and the desire so painful. She remembered her parents, her father's hope of space travel. She studied the photographs taken via satellite of a storm blowing a red cloud off the sun's surface, felt a terrible desire for the father she did not know, and imagined that she, too, must surely have within her the same urge for something beyond ordinary. (77)

Her identity thus remains in question due to the influence of the forces from above i.e. globalization. The traces of territories are crashed by international magazines and lifestyle. Her location while following those magazines does not remain as Indian but rather dissolves and she does not find herself bound to the Indian nationalism. Thus she jumps over Gyan for criticizing the English and westerners. She does not also

show any sorts of sympathy to Indians. Nowhere in the novel, has she felt herself belonging to India.

Sai is a westernized girl who practices the western culture in India.

She was westernized Indian brought up by English nuns, an estranged Indian living in India. The journey he had started so long ago had continued in his descendants. Perhaps he had made a mistake in cutting off his daughter . . . he'd condemned her before he knew her. Despite himself, he felt, in the backwaters of his unconscious, an imbalance in his deeds balancing itself out. (230)

The inevitable transnational situation and impossible pure Indian national identity is ironically spoken out by Sai while Gyan argues for a pure Indian nationalism without any foreigner like Uncle Booty, she says:

If this is what you have been thinking, why didn't you boycott the cheese instead of gobbling it down? Now you attack it? *Hypocrite!* But it was very nice to eat the cheese when you got a chance, no? All that cheese that toast? Hundreds of pieces of cheese toast you must have eaten. Let alone the chocolate cigars. . . . So greedy, eating them like a fat pig. And tuna fish on toast and peanut butter biscuit! (283)

Territorially she is living in India while culturally she is an agglomeration of Indian, Russian, Christian and English cultures. The national boundaries are hence dissolved to create a mixed transnational identity of her.

Cook is the next character to undergo an identity rift caused by transnationalism from above that threatens his pure Indian identity. Biju's life in America linguistically or form of narrations in his letters enters inside the cooks door. His long service to Anglicized Indian judge unknowingly changes his lifestyle. In

addition, Sai's westernized thought and education helps him to forget Indian morphologies and welcome the western cultural artifacts regardless of his living within Indian boundaries. He is no more a pure Indian by his identity.

The cook does not have his own name. He is introduced as a cook throughout the novel which indicates a primary lack in his identity. National culture provides name to a person which is the first very important element to blind the person to the culture and extensively to the nation as well. The crisis in national identity begins right with his nameless state.

He is heavily influenced by the sense of modernization too. The narrator mentions his longing for modernism and says, "This the cook had done for Biju, but also for himself, since the cook's desire was for modernity: toaster ovens, electric shavers, watches, cameras, cartoon colors. He dreamed at night not in the Freudian symbols that still enmeshed others but in modern codes, the digits of a telephone flying away before he could dial them, a garbled television" (63).

Mrs. Sen and Noni have made Mon Ami a place to invite the global elements into house. They are inside house/nation but they live a transnational life in their imagination which takes place in a form of diaspora always haunting her, "Mrs. Sen undefeated by the heat, started up the road to Mon Ami, propelled by the latest news from her daughter, MunMun, in America: she was to be hired by CNN, she reflected happily on how this would upset Lola. Hah, who did Lola Banerjee think *she was?* Putting on airs . . . always showing off about her daughter at the BBC. . ." (73).

Noni longs for a living by the side of sea that indicates her desire to live abroad perhaps with her daughter. "Now and again I wish I lived by the sea", sighed Noni, "At least the waves are never still" (77).

War as a tool to blur the boundaries of the nation always helps to put the territory of a nation in a flux therefore in an uncertainty. Gyan's family has such uncertain belonging to any root. Originally they come from Nepal but fighting battles for Japanese and at the end settling in Indian. Gyan, thus cannot mix or locate himself to India nor can find Nepal in Indian. The narrations of his forefathers service in abroad cuts his part of identity away from the existing one (159).

Gyan's identity further is in rift due to his confused state in between either Sai or the movement in Darjeeling. He has an attachment to Sai who for him stands as India and on the other hand the movement reminds him of his root that is Nepal.

Another beautiful example of transnationalism can be witnessed in a form of Nepali nationalism in Darjeeling. This is a different kind of nationalism that comes vibrantly through a movement that later on converts into violence. This is where a nation creeps into the territory of the next nation. The movement is wholeheartedly overwhelmed by the Nepali national feelings when the participants try to concretize the imaginatively transmitted Nepali nationalism in India. The slogan of the people "Victory to Gorkha liberation Army" (172).

Drawing a long history of the mobility of Nepali people throughout the different parts of the world during First and Second World War, the agitators demand for their compensation across their country in form of the recognition of their root nationalism, a Nepali nationalism. War in itself was helping blur the national boundaries, over that the consistent demand to identify their Nepali nationalism in India is a process of forming Nepali transnational identity of the people living in India. The agitators demand is:

Except us. EXCEPTUS. The Nepalis of India. At that time, in April of 1947, the communist party of India demanded Gorkhasthan but the

request was ignored . . . we are laborers on the tea plantations, coolies dragging heavy loads, soldiers. And are we allowed to become doctors and government workers, owners of the tea plantations? *No!* we are kept at the level of servants. We fought on behalf of the British for two hundred years. We fought in World War One. We went to East Africa, to Egypt, to the Persian Gulf. We were moved from here to there as it suited them. We fought in World War Two. In Europe, Syria, Persia, Malaya, and Burma. Where would be they without the courage of our people? We are still fighting for them. . . And have we been rewarded?

Have we been given compensation? Are we given respect? (174)

America has been presented as a space for multiculturalism where different cultures encroach along with nations carrying in their heart. “Former slaves Colombians and Brazilians and Argentineans, Nigerians, Burmese, Angolans, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Bolivians, Rwandans, Filipinos, Indonesians, Liberians Bruneians, Papua New Guineans, South African. . .World Bank, UN, IMF, everything run by white people” (148-49). Multiculturalism in another form can be understood as a transnational situation where the cultures from below or above happen to come across many others carrying its root across national boundaries to the foreign.

Transnationalism most of the time occurs in a form of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. Odessa’s cosmopolitan style appears when she says, ““Rule of nature” said Odessa to Baz:

Imagine if we were sitting around saying, ‘So-and-so-score years ago, Neanderthals came out of the woods, attacked my family with big dinosaur bone, and now you give back.’ Two of the very first iron pots, my friend, and one toothsome toothy daughter from the first days of

agriculture, when humans had larger molars, and four sample of an early version of the potato claimed, incidentally, by both Chile and Peru. (149)

Her sense of cosmopolitanism is added when the narrator mentions, “she was very witty, Odessa. Baz was proud of her cosmopolitan style, loved the sight of her in her little wire-rimmed glasses. Once he had been shocked to overhear some of their friends say she was black- hearted, but he had put it out of his mind” (149). Odessa and Baz are two perfect examples of how cosmopolitanism becomes a part or means of transnationalism.

A person’s identity gets into rift especially when he/she falls in a conflict between transnationalism from above and below. Odessa explains this situation to Biju:

“you know Biju” she said laughing, “isn’t it ironic, nobody eats beef in Indian and just look at it- it’s the shape of a bit T-Bone”. But here there were Indians eating beef. Indian bankers. Chomp chomp. He fixed them with a concentrated look of meaning as he cleared the plates. They saw it. They knew. He knew. They knew he knew. They pretended they didn’t know he knew. They looked away. They pretended they didn’t know he knew. They looked away. He took on a sneering look. But they could afford not to notice. . . One shouldn’t give up one’s religion, the principles of one’s parents and their parents before them. No, no matter what . . . those who could see a difference between a holy cow and an unholy cow would win. Those who couldn’t see would lose. (151)

She has confusion within about how one should try to maintain a nation and national ritual practices across the nation. This is what intensifies the transnational situation and identity of a person where the identity gets into a rift simply because national morphologies engraved in a person surface in amidst foreign cultural artifacts affecting the same identity.

Summing up, the characters in *The Inheritance of Loss* suffer from the identity rift due to the failure of the nationalism and its morphologies to hold their identity. Such failure is caused by the transnational situation created by the globalization that invites transnational forces from above and below. In order to intensify the identity rift in characters, the novel also makes the use of various symbols like convent school, Gorkhali's protest in India, the stories of war etc. which defy the control of the territorial and cultural boundaries of a nation-state in the identity of the individuals.

Chapter: Three

Traces of Nationalism in the Identities of the Characters

In the age of transnational discussion, the world has not lost the debate of the relevancy of nationalism and its control over an identity. The question is whether identity completely can ignore the national morphologies. Is identity possible simply in transnational imaginations without resting it to its root? Radhakrishnan reads Chatterjee to assert the relevancy of nationalism in *Between Identity and Location* and writes, “Chatterjee observes that nationalism could neither ignore the west completely nor capitulate to it entirely: the West and its ideals of material progress had to be assimilated selectively without any fundamental damage to the native and ‘inner’ Indian self” (192). Chatterjee does not ignore the necessity to respect the external forces. However, his argument lies strongly in how much it is necessary to preserve the national or native or local elements related to one’s self. Self here is a product of national morphologies. Assimilation for him cannot eliminate or destroy the national identity.

Nationalism’s role in fact is almost impossible to ignore since it “deploys the inner/outer split to achieve false and repressive resolution of its identity” (Radhakrishnan 193). Absence of nationalism is the absence of identity as a whole. He adds, “The locus of the true self, the inner/traditional/ spiritual sense of place, is exiled from process of history while locus of historical knowledge fails to speak for the true identity of the nationalist subject” (Radhakrishnan 193). The history devoid of national morphologies fails to voice the true identity. It rather creates a false identity of a person.

Defining Anomie as a condition of inconsistency referring to the transnational situation, Liah Greenfeld in *Nationalism and the Mind*, “Reflections on Two

Christmas” argues for the realization for the change in this situation thereby avoiding the chance of nullification of the authority. She writes, “Anomie denotes a condition of acute inconsistency between different values, norms and cognitions, including the perception of reality, which as a result of this inconsistency, neutralize each other and lose their authority” (9). Modern societies are becoming more secular in their nature which in turn weakens the identity as a whole. For her, “Modern societies, produced by nationalism, because of their very secularism, openness, and the elevation of the individual, are necessarily anomic” (212). Opacity should be avoided for a better identity.

Nationalism and transnationalism are the contested terms for the present world. National morphologies are weakening every moment due to the growing control of globalization, cybernetics, migration, postmodern theories, transnationalism from above and below, hybridity, diaspora etc. however, nationalism as a root culture cannot be ignored and erased in practice. It remains in a form of inner self in individuals. Assimilating the foreign can be accepted but it cannot be made absolute. Thus identity both respects the national and transnational morphologies.

Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient* provides with its characters who, while trying to disobey the national morphologies away from their homeland, ironically happen to fall into the claw of nationalism. Hana and Almasi, two major characters of the novel are reminded of their nationalism while living in an Italian Villa. Caravaggio reveals the English Patient’s Hungarian identity and at the same time brings the flashbacks in Hana’s mind from her country, Canada and her childhood. Kripal realizes his wrong decision of living away from his homeland and returns India. Caravaggio has always been carrying the more bitter memories of his

nation. All these turnovers in the life of the characters impart a message of the inseparable connection of individuals to their nation and nationality.

Caravaggio is away from home but still he thinks about the skill his country taught him during the war time. He was a spy and a thief that he learnt from the country. While staying at villa with Hana, he seems to be away and carefree of the nation of his birth. However, he has been carrying this skill of spying and stealing as gifts from his country letting the presence of his country in his mind, activities and talks. This is what keeps him consciously connected to his country forever.

Caravaggio offers wine to Hana and Hana comes to know it is stolen, she says, “Yes, Yes, why don’t you scrounge a gramophone someday. By the way, I think this is called looting” (84). Caravaggio answers, “My country taught me all this. It’s what I did for them during the war” (85). He is ever since carrying the traces of the country imprinted in his mind. Therefore, avoiding of national morphologies is not possible in his life.

Almasy is reminded of his Hungarian nationality by Caravaggio. Caravaggio tells the story of Almasy to Hana. He says:

“Let me tell you a story”, Caravaggio says to Hana. “there was a Hungarian named Almasy, who worked for the Germans during the war. He flew a bit with the Afrika Korps, but he was more valuable than that. In the 1930s he had been one of the great desert explorers. He knew every waterhole and had helped map the Sand Sea. He knew all about the desert. He knew all about dialects. Does this sound familiar? Between the two wars he was always on expeditions out of Cairo. One was to search for Zerzura- the lost oasis. Then when war broke out he joined the Germans. In 1941 he became a guide for spies,

taking them across the desert into Cairo. What I want to tell you is, I think the English Patient is not English.” (163)

Almasy is the only character whose identity is a great puzzle to everyone because he has not just lost his memory of his belonging to his country of birth but also lost his face. No one recognizes him neither by face nor by the country. In such situation, Caravaggio narrates the life of Almasy to Hana, that as evidence tells us that however a person hides or tends to forget the country of his belonging, he or she is bound to have it explored by anyone or anything at any point of their life. Almasy is not an identity-less person. He has his history and his homeland to affect the people's understanding of him.

Similarly Hana's Canadian root remains in shadow for certain time period. However, the root inside has resided so strongly that she finds Caravaggio interesting because he reminds her of her childhood and the country. As the very opening conversation between them in villa, Caravaggio reminds her of the memory of her tooth pulling in a hospital in Canada where she had met Caravaggio. At the back of Hana's mind there is Canada still alive revitalized by Caravaggio. Caravaggio tells her the episode from a birthday party in their childhood. He says:

It was someone's birthday party late at night on Danforth Avenue. The Night Crawler restaurant. Do you remember, Hana? Everyone had to stand and sing a song. Your father, me, Giannetta, friends, and you said you wanted to as well-for the first time. You were still at school then, and you had learned the song in a French class. (53)

A long episode by Caravaggio forces her to recall the parts herself. She says, “When I was a child I thought of you always as the Scarlet pimpernel, and in my dreams I stepped onto the night roofs with you. You came home with cold meals in your

pockets, pencil cases, sheet music off some Forest Hill piano for me” (55).

Caravaggio brings her childhood memory back. To remember her childhood is to relate herself to the past and her past is the history of Canada. Even when she tries to concentrate to her patient, Hana has her nation in form of her childhood memory which she can never discount from her being and identity.

Caravaggio thus is not just a character of the novel, but is also a bridge to connect other characters to their homeland. He wakes the sleeping nationalism in Hana and Almasy along with a provoking conversation with Kripal where he asks Kripal about why is he in Europe serving the white people at war. He says, “The trouble with all of us is we are where shouldn’t be, what are we doing in Italy? What is Kip doing dismantling bombs in Orchards? For god’s sake? What is he doing fighting English wars?” (122). This might have enticed Kripal to decide to return his country in the end of the novel.

Kripal has a strong sense of his root and country towards the end of the novel. He realizes how badly he has been deceived by the west and he lost his valuable time like in a dream in the west fighting for the Europeans while his Asia was burning in the fire of atom bombs. He sums it up to Hana and says:

I grew up with traditions from my country, but later, more often, from your country. Your fragile white island that with customs and manners and books and prefects and reason somehow converted the rest of the world. You stood for precise behavior. I knew if I lifted a teacup with the wrong finger I’d be banished. If I tied the wrong kind of knot in the tie I was out. Was it just ships that gave you such power? Was it, as my brother said, because you had the histories and printing presses? (283)

This realization of his being uncomfortably situated in Europe helps him see his connection to his tradition and culture. It brings him closer to the nation and will to return home. Not only his country, but he remembers the Asia as a whole and undergoes a situation where “if he closes his eyes he sees the streets of Asia full of fire. It rolls across cities like a burst map, the hurricane of heat withering bodies as it meets them, the shadow of humans suddenly in the air. This tremor of western wisdom” (284). It further reminds him of his brothers saying that is filled with the sense of nationalism. He recalls his brother’s saying:

My brother told me. Never turn your back on Europe. The deal makers. The contract makers. The map drawers. Never trust Europeans, he said. Never shake hands with them. But we, oh, we were easily impressed-by speeches and medals and your ceremonies. What have I been doing these last few years? Cutting away, defusing, limbs of evil, for what? For this to happen? (284-85)

To be able to see the Europeans as the ‘other’ is to find himself unfit to that culture and nationalism. Kripal is waking up to know the place of nation and his culture in his life. So determined he is that he has decided to return home. He leaves Hana back along with Europe and rides his bike to make his way homewards.

Similarly *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai too reinforces the inevitability of ignoring of the nationalism and its traces in the identities of the people. The characters move around the world or welcome the global forces to their locality in the beginning but fail to completely mitigate the presence of nationalism in their life. Biju returns home from America, Jemubhai from Britain, and Uncle Potty returns his home country by the end reminding us of the ultimate need for the realization of the fact that nation is inevitable.

Diaspora on the one hand seems to support the transnational situation while at the same time brings the homeland in the imagination of the person thereby revitalizing the importance of it in a person's identity. Biju and his friends are not only afraid of losing their homeland but also nostalgic about India. Even the TV show reminds them of India and their longing for their homeland. The narrator narrates, "Then, of course, there were those who lived and died in America and never saw again their families, not for ten years, twenty, thirty, never again"(109). Along with this fear, their sweet memory of India can be felt when the narrator further adds, "How did one do it? At the Queen of Tarts, they watched the TV shows on Sunday mornings on the Indian channel that showcased an immigration lawyer fielding questions" (109). The lawyers defending for the legality of the Indians in America is an attempt to foreground the Indian identity despite the fact that they are away from their homeland geographically. It suggests, however, a person can never get rid of various national morphologies even in case of being away from the country territorially.

The presence of diaspora in an identity of an expatriate Biju does not end in it. One night while lying on his basement, he relives his past days with his family in his memory. He recalls his grandparents and parents along with his good times with his friends. He recalls the culturally especial moments like Diwali and the prayer done to *peepul* tree. He says to himself, "how peaceful our village is. How good the roti tastes there! It is because the atta is ground by hand, not by machine...and because it is made on choolah, better than anything cooked on a gas or a kerosene stove...Fresh roti, fresh butter, fresh milk still warm from the buffalo..."(113). Such memory is never going to be washed off his mind. It is so deeply seated in his mind that wherever he goes, he is bound to carry it with him as a core of his identity. Transnational situation ironically strengthens his longing for his homeland.

Nationalism's consciousness and the longing for the root is an inevitable phenomenon in a person's life specially when the person is away from the homeland. Father Booty who originally is a Swiss but has been living in India is sure to find his homeland a suitable place for him to live in. Campaign of cleaning the nation off the foreigners will send him back to his country of his nationality and there he will fit himself. Sai predicts Uncle Booty's days in Europe and says, "there were concert halls in Europe to which Father Booty would soon return, opera houses where music molded entire audiences into a single grieving or celebrating heart, and where the applause rang like a downpour..."(244-45). Uncle Booty's identity has a connection to this culture and only this culture can provide him a better understanding of who he is. He finds himself a foreigner in India despite his all efforts to adjust himself like the Indians. Identity thus is bound to obey the root of a person regardless of the geographical location.

Mr. Iype, who has been living in America as a newsagent, makes a strong argument about the cleansing off the foreigners from a nation for the purity and peace. He thinks India has to be a place of Indians alone. The foreigners definitely bring their nationalism along with them in India and try to establish it. That pollutes the pure Indian identity. While informing the trouble caused by Nepalese in Darjeeling to Biju, he says, "they should kick the bastards back to Nepal," continued Mr. Iype. "Bangladesh to Bangladesh, Afghans to Afghanistan, all Muslims to Pakistan, Tibetans, Bhutanese, why are they sitting in our country?" (250-51). To let the foreigners live a one's country is to let the foreign culture contaminate the culture of own nation. The fact is that how long the foreigner live in India, they are not likely to wash off their belongingness to the root. Nationalism presence in a person's identity thus cannot be denied.

The Inheritance of Loss has the characters who are always in a locational mobility and sometimes those who stay at homeland too are disturbed by the globalization or the transnationalism from above. However, in its ending note, the characters are dragged back to their root and nation. They obeying their culture and territory decide to return to their homeland. Biju, who always dreamed of going to the USA, returns home forgetting every materialistic opportunity in there. Similarly, his father the cook, is pleased to see his son back careless of the pleasure and earning of America. Jemubhai after completion of his study came back to India and served the country. Father Booty is back to Europe. All these concluding parts of the characters in the novel are to remind the readers that individuals are bound to their nation despite all the temporary upheavals caused by the current concepts like post-nationalism, transnationalism, globalization etc.

Chapter: Four

Acceptance of the Rift in Identity

The age long belief of identity being grounded on nation and national morphologies has been problematized by the emergence of transnationalism. Transnationalism thrives on the concepts like globalization, cosmopolitanism, diaspora etc. and weakens the hold of nationalism in identity of an individual. Such identity dwindling in between national morphologies and transnational imagination neither can completely ignore the traces of nationalism nor can keep it away from transnational influence but, eventually results into a rift. The characters in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* are destined such rift in their identity.

The characters in *The English Patient* are reluctant to respect the morphologies of their home country therefore they unannounced form a state in Italian Villa. They find Villa, a space from where they can challenge the national identity in order to form a new one that always remains in fluctuation. However, the villa community too cannot give a pure identity to them since they, most of the time, feel diasporic over there. To feel diasporic is to be unable to forsake the national trances.

Diaspora causes fluctuation in the characters' identities. Transcending the national morphologies and living in a new territory does not allow them to form a next pure identity. Transnational state's possibility of taking a role of new nation to form their identity is always shattered by Diaspora. Italian villa cannot be a next nation for them to form their fixed identity it's because they often go to their original nation or culture while living over there.

They live together forgetting the world around and at the same time they talk about the origin from where they have come. Therefore a new about to be formed

identity at villa is challenged/ shattered by their imaginary homeland while the national identity has already been shattered by their transcending of their homelands. This is what never allows their identity to be solid but rather helps to dwindle between villa identity and diasporic identity. Identity of the characters, thus, is in a rift in *The English Patient*.

The Inheritance of Loss, on the other hand, presents a battle/conflict between two forces; global and the local that definitely shatter their local and global identity one by one. The characters swing in these two identities thereby creating a rift in them. There is a thin line distinction between the nature of rift of identity of the characters in between *The English Patient* and *The Inheritance of Loss*. *The English Patient* creates a new space that challenges the national identity while *The Inheritance of Loss* deals about two kinds of identities: one from above and one from below. Characters dwindle between these two. And due to the global force the characters within the nation create imaginaries that further create a rift in them.

Kripal Singh is similar to Jemubhai Patel. Both of them seem more diasporic but as they return to their own country they still are haunted by the foreign. Curing or healing the rift thus is not possible at all. Almasy has no national identity at all; nor a newly formed. He is a most confused character in the novel. Hana is dragged to her national culture hardly or only when Caravaggio reminds her of her childhood/schooldays but more willing to relate herself to Villa and Kripal from India. Therefore here identity too is shattered into many pieces that mocks her Canadian identity.

Lola, Noni, Cook, Jemubhai's wife come to a different group of people who have never been to that place which throughout their life has played a role to create rift in their sense of identity. It is transnationalism from above. Transnational imagination is a key for them to invite this kind of rift in them.

Diaspora and transnational state put hand in hand to widen the gap/fissure of the characters/people. Transnational is one that helps them go beyond the nation. But pure transnational state is impossible due to the remembrance of the nation/ homeland that creates diasporic feeling in the characters. Because of the shouldering/ co-working of transnational imagination and Diaspora; a character's identity always remains in a rift. Similarly, transnationalism is not only confined beyond the territory. It is also a matter of imagination. One within a territory of his birthplace can be a transnational subject like in *The Inheritance of Loss*. *The English Patient* from diasporic transnational state challenges the national morphologies while *The Inheritance of Loss* exemplifies the transnationalism from below and above. After all, the characters from both novels are ever entangled in the question of the influence of transnationalism or the hold of nationalism in their identity. This unsolved question ultimately creates a rift in their identity. And there remains no option for them to accept the rifted identity.

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