

Partition and Postmemory in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*

This thesis aspires the individual and the second-generation diaspora memories through the lens of postmemory in the four stories of Jhumpa Lahiri selected from *Interpreter of Maladies*. This text explores the observations and experiences of partition and its aftermath of first and second generation diasporas who emigrated to the United States and the United Kingdom from Indian Subcontinent. It also studies about second generation diasporas' observation and understanding of earlier generation's suffering and dissociation. Here, the problem is that as the second generation of diasporas, the writer portrays the experiences of traumatic events and suffering of an earlier generation of diasporas as it is. And, the writer explores the atrocities of partition even though she has not lived it. The researcher argues that second generation diaspora, Jhumpa Lahiri who has not experienced partition and traumatic experiences but she portrays it in her short stories, though she makes it possible through the observation and the information that she obtained by transmitted knowledge or postmemories. In doing so, there is a complexity in portraying the memory (her lived experiences) and Postmemory. This analysis contributes to the rising problem on the result of partition and its aftermath within the upcoming generation that has still continued and transmitted from generations. It also puts into the effect of an earlier generation of diasporas' longing and belonging of their homeland to the later generation.

In 1947, the partition of the Indian subcontinent (India and Pakistan) left an indelible scar in the psyche of Indian people. It also led to the partition of Pakistan in 1971 that created two new nations Pakistan and Bangladesh. Millions of people are forced to migrate during and after the partition, they migrate in a belief of secured life in the foreign land. It is obvious that the incidents received from partition grow hatred

between the people of Indian Subcontinent. And, it transmits through generation to generation over each decade. In this transmission of partition history or experiences and longing and belonging of their homeland, diaspora writers are emerging in the field of literature. They reflect their experiences, memories and Post memories in their writing such as Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh and other diasporic writers.

Artistically, Lahiri's representations are liked the firsthand experiences because she portrays the incidents and the sufferings of diasporas which are based on her parents, and also based on the observation of the child characters. The representation of partition brings the discussion of historical incidents and understanding of the second generation in the present. Such meaningful representation is an artistic representation. The second generation writers and artists portray their understanding through the stories and fiction where memory plays a vital role. Memory is the collection of the past which is associated with the things that help to understand the present. Thus, the second generation diaspora writers artistically represent loneliness, nostalgia, bewilderment and traumatic experiences of an earlier generation. They receive memory through the transmission. Such transmitted memory is called Postmemory. Thus, within the transmission of memory in the generations, it does not have the same impact as on the victim. It has less impact on the upcoming generation because of the received memory associates with the understanding of the receiver and the world they live in. Thus, they negotiate historical events and represent them in their way of understanding and feeling. It is continuously happening in the upcoming generation too.

Interpreter of Maladies, winning the Pulitzer Prize, is a short story collection published in 1999. There are nine short stories among them setting of three stories is in India and others in the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Nilanjana Sudheshna Lahiri (family nickname “Jhumpa”) was born on July 11, 1967, in London England who debut in writing in 1999 with this short story collection. Her parents had migrated to the United Kingdom from Calcutta. Due to her father job they migrated to the United States, eventually settled in South Kingston, Rhode Island. When she finished her schooling, she went to attend Bernard College and focused on literature and then joined Boston University. Before receiving her doctorate in Renaissance Studies, she received three literary Master’s degrees.

Interpreter of Maladies by Jhumpa Lahiri is one of such diasporic short story collections as dealing with the displaced immigrants and observation of second-generation character. In this short story collection, characters encounter different diasporic problems like miscommunication, nostalgia, isolation, hatred, split cultural identity, psychological problem and, traumatic experiences. And also, Lahiri artistically represents the partition and its aftermath through this short story collection. The stories explore the transmission of the memory and the observation of the second generation of the diaspora. The first generation are the victim or the one who suffered the traumatic events and the second generation are those who observe or witness the incidents or suffering of the earlier generation. The narrations in the stories show the understanding of the latter generation of diaspora about the history of partition and its traumatic experience. According to the review of Ronny Noor:

Lahiri's stories are not just about this malady of secrets between spouses, but also concern broader social issues. In "A Real Durwan" the residents of Calcutta tenement unjustly cast out an old sweeper because of a theft in the building while she was away in town. They show no sympathy for the innocent victim despite her pleas. (365-366)

It succinctly describes not only the individual issues but also concerns about the broader social issue. Lahiri portrays the incidents happened during the partition while crossing the border through the story. During the partition 'Boori Ma' accidentally departed from her family and got stuck in India. And then she worked as a 'durwan'. When people who stayed in the building came to know there was theft in the building; they accused 'Boori Ma' and did not show sympathy for the innocent victim despite her plead. This is a clear representation of incidents that millions of innocent people were killed and victimized during the partition. As a second generation diaspora, Lahiri represents the traumatic experiences through the transmitted memory either through the stories she heard or her own observation or archive.

At the time of partition, millions of innocent people were victimized and lost their life. And also, thousands of them left alone or separated from their family in Indo- Pak partition. Those incidents and the suffering of the diaspora in the host country are portrayed in the short story collection. In search of a better future, many people are migrated in the USA and UK in skilled work categories as labourers and settled there. In a process of migrating to settling in the host country, they faced many problems and suffered from different problems like loneliness, discomfort and mental illness too. Those suffering, pain and violence they faced in the host country and their struggling is observed by this generation either through their stories or witnessing it. Such a generation who get the memory of their parents' experiences and others, projected in their work like Lahiri. According to the Assistant Professor of Osmania University, Dr Kiran Kumar G:

“When Mr Pirzada Came to Dine” is a political story which builds around a little girl's hopes and fears on far-off situations such as the Pakistan Civil War and invasion of Dacca by the Pakistani army and its consequences on the

family of Mr Pirzada. It discusses the differences between Pakistan and the United States, through the way a family lives and dines with Mr Pirzada. Told from the point of view of a ten-year-old child, Lila, this story refers to the time of the war of East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh) for its autonomy. (60)

It clarifies the story is interconnected to the partition of Pakistan. It shows the historical time period of the Pakistani Civil war. The above excerpt describes the feeling and observation of second generation diaspora who observed the suffering of the first generation diaspora. Here, the ten-year-old child has both hopes for Mr Pirzada's complete family and fears that Mr Pirzada may lose his family. It further eludes the difference between Pakistan and the United States in the eyes of second generation diaspora. TV news triggers their memories to remember the family member of Mr. Pirzada not only by Mr. Pirzada but also by Lila and her family member.

This short story collection explores the political issues of the Indian subcontinent and the transmission of historical and traumatic events to the later generation. The stories show the political turmoil of the Pakistani civil war and the second generation child comes to know about the atrocities happening in the war and its effects on the earlier generation. On the same issue, Kakutani writes: [...] Mr Pirzada, who has lost contact with his family back home in Dacca during the civil war of 1971, Lila learns about politics and political turmoil for the first time and the personal consequences of such change. She learns what it means to face losing one's family and one's home (n.pg). Kakutani talks about Pakistani civil war and Mr. Pirzada who lost contact with his family. Here, observing the earlier generation's suffering becomes the sources of understanding of historical events and their pain and loneliness. The writer portrays the unspeakable losses during the partition of the Indian

subcontinent through Lilia in the story. It also discusses the second generations who are witnessing the events, also has an effect on them. Here, Karin Moller asserts:

[...] they reflect a wider time span, stretching from the time of post-Partition India to a cross-cultural, globalised present that lies “beyond.” Juxtaposing them gives us an idea not only of how cultural traditions in the past shaped and affected the characters’ understanding of their subjectivities but also of how the continuous process of change has influenced individuals more or less radically in different parts of the world. (65)

The above excerpt illustrates the scenario of the post-partition India and those displaced immigrants who adapted host country culture and tradition. It happens after a long time span of post-partition. These changing processes of the people bewilder the immigrants that influence upon the individual in the understanding of subjectivity.

Despite the adaptation of the host country’s culture, the objects, image, and stories trigger the diaspora’s memory that still hunts them. Thus, diasporas are captured between the world in which they inherit and the world they found now themselves. In this way, the text shows the aftermath of partition and migration in an individual or in general. In the view of Taylor Shea:

Lahiri uses her cultural background as an Indian American to create plots and characters that express the juxtaposition in her own life. She builds a balanced representation of her cultural group she openly admits that *Interpreter of Maladies* is a reflection of her own experiences as well as those of her parents and their Indian immigrant friends. (2)

It clearly examines Lahiri as the second generation of the diaspora who observed the culture and tradition through family, friends and other Indian immigrants and projects it in her short story collection. This shows the transmission of the culture, tradition

and other diasporic experiences from generation to next generation. Lahiri also admits that the short story collection is a reflection of her observation. Thus, this is how the new generations of diasporas are influenced by their ancestral and host country culture and tradition.

The memories of an earlier generation and the way of its transmission to later generation are projected in the short story collection. The story explores the earlier generation memorizes their ancestral land when the objects or things trigger their memory. It also explains their pain and loneliness after remembering their homeland. According to Angelo Monaco:

Cooking Indian food is the only way of reconnecting with her past, but it also triggers an automatic and unconscious neurotic mechanism against anxiety: even if the recreation of these past experiences generates wounds, it enables, as Freud explains in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle,” to recover “an initial state from which the living entity has at one time or other departed and to which it is striving to return”. (164)

In the above excerpts, Indian food triggers Miss Sen’s memory that displaced her psychologically and remembers her Indian kitchen, people and the way they work in the kitchen. It generates the wounds in the first generation that becomes the sources of understanding the earlier generation’s suffering for the later generation. At the same time the neurotic mechanism active against her pain and homesickness that helps her to come in her initial stage. According to Freud beyond the pleasure principle to recover from those anxieties, brain or memory starts to function in an initial stage and the current living situation and to which it strives to return.

Monaco explains the things or situation of a person that helps to memorize the past event. The kitchen and cooking food trigger the memory of Miss Sen that

belongs to her ancestral country. In such a way, Lahiri reflects diaspora memories and nostalgia in the short story collection. In this context Shaden Adel Nasser writes:

Lahiri's expression of the sense of home continues in "When Mr. Pirzada came to Dine" (1999). The story is narrated by the Indian-American girl, Lilia who is looking back at events that happened when she was ten. The story is based upon the time of Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1971. Lilia's parents, originally from India, miss their homelands and to ease their homesickness, they "trail their fingers [...] through the columns of the university directory, circling surnames familiar to their part of the world. (5-6)

This excerpt described the remembering the homelands and homesickness of the character of a story "Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine". The story is narrated by ten-year girl Lilia. The story is based on 1971's Pakistani conflict. Lilia parents remember their homeland and to heal their homesickness they searched familiar surname in the university directory. It also explains Lahiri represents the diaspora character who remembers their homeland through the news on the television or the things. It also shows Lahiri's attachments with her ancestral land and its belongings. Similarly, it also reflects the partition history of the Indian subcontinent.

In a similar way, Marianne Hirsch argues that she came to Postmemory on the basis of her own autobiographical readings of works by second-generation writers and visual artists (106). Through the reading of their works and her own observation of traumatic suffering of the Holocaust survivors, Hirsch became apparent to the atrocities and its aftermath. This is the way that develops certain quality in second generation diasporas that are evoked in their writing and Hirsch defines it as a 'Post memory'. The second generation experiences historical, individual, collective and cultural trauma through the images, stories and witnessing the victim of

atrocities. According to Hirsch, Postmemory “is a structure of inter- and transgenerational transmission of traumatic knowledge and experience; it is a consequence of traumatic recall but... at a generational remove” (20). Thus, the researcher investigates the second generation who acknowledge the historical incidents that happened in the life of their family or earlier generation, these generations' writers or artists who negotiate the aspect of the history and actual suffering of the victim and represents their understanding in their work.

The transmitted traumatic experiences are different than the real experiences of the victim. The impact of traumatic events becomes continuously lesser in the later generation. The later generations writer's or artist's works are the reflection of their understanding and the effect of traumatic experiences or suffering. Moreover, beyond the survivors and victims' generations, it also transmits to others' generation either through the story, image or archive. Such generation also portrays the continuous effect on the generation and employs the feelings that they are also connected to the atrocities. Hirsch defines Postmemory as “Postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they “remember” only by means of the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up” (106). It explains that the earlier generation's experiences who are victimized, remember through stories, images, and behaviours which is also transmitted to the later generation. There may be different means of the transmission of memory either through Familial or Affiliative memory.

In the view of Hirsch, she explains that there are two ways to transfer the memory (called Post memory) namely Familial and Affiliative postmemory. Familial Postmemory is the way where the information is transferred through the family

member. It is a direct transmission of memory from parents to the child. It also defines a personal connection to the traumatic events or to the survivors of atrocities. Affiliative Postmemory is transferred in a different way. It is the horizontal transmission of memory. It means the memory transferred from literal second generation to other generation who seeks their connection to events. It responds a little connection to the person or the events that affected in the life of the person. There is no more difference between Familial and Affiliative Postmemory. For Affiliative Post memory, Familial Post memory is an essential part of memory. Hirsch argues, "Familial structures of mediation and representation facilitate the affiliative acts of the post-generation" (115). The Familial Postmemory facilitates in the act of Affiliative post memory such as the contemporary situation, understanding and connection with the earlier generation which structured the web of transmission of memory that is Affiliative Post memory.

Parmer has discussed the partition that the memories of partition atrocities are transferred from earlier generation to later generation. Not only the event that has experienced or witnessed by the second generation affected them but also the transferred knowledge that followed generationally. It has influenced the generations even though a wider time span of Post-partition. Lahiri's work shows the effect of transmitted knowledge of partition and the suffering of the diaspora. As Prabhjot Parmar argues:

Exercising what Hirsch ... calls "postmemory," the second or third generation in the diaspora are trying to forge a connection with the experiences of the witnesses and survivors, and in so doing, are negotiating aspects of history while expressing their understanding of partition and the accompanying violence, displacement, loss, and homelessness. (206)

Parmar explains the works of second-generation artists and writers show their engagement with the partition or Holocaust atrocities. They have not the firsthand experience of the event but they grew up observing and hearing the stories of it and reflecting the event with their understanding. It is generationally transferred through familial and affiliative postmemory. In this way, the researcher examines second generation diaspora writer, Lahiri's selective four short stories that engage with the partition and its aftermath and the emigrant suffering in the host country.

Through the stories or arts, the second generation writers and artists reveal how the knowledge of history is transmitted and how they acknowledge the suffering of Victim. Hirsch, argues:

Second generation fiction, art, memoir, and testimony are shaped by the attempt to represent the long-term effects of living in close proximity to the pain, depression, and dissociation of persons who have witnessed and survived massive historical trauma. They are shaped by the child's confusion and responsibility, by the desire to repair, and by the consciousness that the child's own existence may well be a form of compensation for the unspeakable loss.(112)

It clarifies the works of the second generation in art and literature is an attempt to portray the effects of atrocities that have been witnessed. It has long-term effects on them who have experienced it closely and it transmits to the next generation. The second generation artist and writer choose the child character to represent the unspeakable loss. Representing the child character shows the deep effects of traumatic experiences on the narrator of the story. They used a child to represent their experiences and understanding of their art and writing in the form of compensation

for their losses during and after the events. This shows the writers and artists' understanding of the suffering of the survivors or the victim.

In the stories of this collection, Lahiri also reflects the unspeakable loss of Diasporas to whom she witnessed through the child character. Her story "*When Mr Prizzada Comes to Dine*" and "*Miss.Sen*" where child characters Lilia and Eliot reflect the unspeakable loss of the first-generation diaspora. In the story, Liliashows the second generations' observation of the pain, depression and dissociation of an earlier generation.

In the short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies*, there are nine stories among them only selected four stories are used in the analysis by the researcher. Other stories are mostly based on the theme of marriage and relationship. The selected four stories are based on the historical events and the nostalgia and the observation of the second generation diaspora. Through the selected stories, the researcher investigates how the second-generation diasporas experiences are presented in the text and how they used the aspect of history and memory related to dissociation, pain and violence. It also examines how Lahiri successfully represented the partition and diasporas homesickness even though she does not have firsthand experiences. As a review under the topic "*Biographies Collected Throughout The Web*", explains that the influence of frequent childhood visits to India and parents who are still a part of the Indian world despite their immigration to America thirty years ago shaped her book (people weekly) (225). It clarifies that Lahiri represents the world that she observed and experienced contemporarily and the world that transmitted to her through the parents and other archives. She represents her experiences through the child character and as a narrator. Her stories show the transmission of knowledge of historical events in the generations.

In the story *When Mr. Pirzada came to the Dine*, Lahiri represents the historical background of the Pakistani civil war and the atrocities occurred in the war. This story also reflects second generation diaspora's learning and observing the event and incidents happened in their ancestral land and suffering of the first generation of diasporas who immigrated to the host country.

That year Pakistan was engaged in civil war. The eastern frontier, where Dacca was located, was fighting for autonomy from the ruling regime in the west. In March, Dacca had been invaded, torched and shelled by the Pakistani army. A teacher was dragged onto the streets and shut down, women were dragged into barracks and raped. By the end of the summer, three hundred thousand people were said to have died. (27)

The above extract talks about the historical time period of civil war in Pakistan. It also reflects the mayhem that occurred in the war. Lilia gets this historical background from the news on Television. In fact, she has not experienced it as it is as a victim but she is witnessing the event through the television. Here, television and parents become the source of postmemory of the events happened in the war and the partition of the Indian subcontinent. The writer represents the Pakistani civil war as though she has experienced it lively. She was just three years old when the civil war began and she is not capable to understand it as she narrates in the story. This shows the transmission of knowledge that she gets from others as Lilia becomes aware of the historical background of the Indian subcontinent through her parents and other archives. Here, the news on the television has more affected Mr Pirzada than Lilia. The news only doesnot affect Lilia but the combination of news and the suffering of Mr.Pirzada deeply affect Lilia. In this way, the effect of atrocities on the second generation is lesser than the earlier generation.

In the story, Lilia comes to know that her parents and Mr. Pirzada are different even though they share the same food and talk the same language. When her father informed her that they were Indian and Mr. Pirzada was Pakistani since partition “our country was divided in 1947” (29). She also knows about the huge migration of people in India as her father notifies “they are estimating nine million at the count” (33). She is observing the suffering or homesickness of her parents when they “used to trail their fingers, at the start of each new semester, through the columns of the university directory, circling surnames familiar to their part of the world” (28-29). As Hirsch argues that family life, even in its most intimate moments, is entrenched in a collective imaginary shaped by the public, generational structures of fantasy and projection and by a shared archive of stories and images that inflect the transmission of individual and familial remembrance (114).

Similarly, Lilia’s observation of her parents arises a feeling of emotional attachment to the ancestral land. For her ancestral home means just coloured space on the map as represented on the atlas, but she knows something that gives a sense of emotional attachment with her ancestral country. She remembers her mother revelation of being typical Indian women as her mother expresses “resembled a woman wearing a sari with her left arm extended” (30). As Hirsch argues, “... postmemory is not an identity position but a generational structure of transmission embedded in multiple forms of mediation” (114). The transferred memory from parents to the child is the Familial Postmemory reflected in the text. Lahiri represents the partition of Indian subcontinent and suffering of diaspora through the knowledge she gets from her parents and observing the victim. All this information and the atrocities represented in the text is the postmemory that is transferred to her from her parents and archive as Lilia gets from her parents and history book.

There is another story that illustrates the traumatic experiences and suffering of diaspora, *A Real Durwan*. Boori Ma is a partition refugee as the narrator passes on “No one doubted she was a refugee, the accent in her Bengali made that clear” (81). The narrator is witnessing the victim of partition. Boori Ma is a character of the story represents the diaspora who is dissociated from her family during the partition while crossing the border. The narrator mentions “the turmoil had separated her from a husband, four daughters, a two-story brick house, a rosewood almari, and a number of coffee boxes whose skeleton keys she still wore,” (80). It clarifies Boori Ma is remembering her family and the incidents that separated her from family. This shows the sense of homesickness and suffering of being alone after the deportation from the family. As Hirsch argues “Loss of family, of home, of a feeling of belonging and safety in the world “bleed” from one generation to the next” (112). The narrator understands the feeling of Boori Ma towards her country and family. This is how the other observes the victim of partition and the knowledge is transmitted to them. In this way, later generation got the knowledge of those historical events and it is reflected in their way of understanding.

In this way, the text shows the traumatic experiences of Boori Ma who was a victim of Partition. Not only portrayed the suffering of the diaspora in the text but also the transmission of knowledge that got by the writer through observing the survivors of partition. The second generation writer, Lahiri explores her understanding of the border social issue. In the essay *Rite and Return*, Hirsch and Nancy argue that the painful past can sometimes be reframed through writing. When suffering is translated into fictional narrative and art, it becomes a way to counter the history of violence through the aesthetics of reattachment (9). Lahiri also portrays those indelible scars

through this story that still hunts to the later generation. She reframed the story of survivors in her own way of understanding.

Lahiri elucidates the impact of the traumatic experiences of earlier generation upon the later generation like her generation. This shows the transmission of historical traumatic events to a later generation, its impact and their understanding. Similarly, Lahiri represents the suffering of diaspora as she describes:

Still, the residents of this particular flat building could not reconcile Boori Ma's claim to prior wealth alongside the more likely account of how she had crossed the East Bengal border, with the thousands of other's on the back of a truck between sacks of hemp. And yet there were days when Boori Ma insisted that she had come to Calcutta on a bullock cart. (72)

The above extract shows that no one understands the grief of Boori Ma. The people did not care about it and just take it for entertainment. They only know about Boori Ma is a durwan of their building. Artistically, Lahiri employs the effects of traumatic experiences of the survivors and the understanding of those experiences by the later generation in the selected four stories. Lahiri attempts to represent the effects of witnessing or living close to the pain, depression, and dissociation of partition victims. Here, Boori Ma is portrayed as a survivor of massive traumatic incidents of partition. She remembers her family and thinking about them. Even though she tells the story about her family to the other but no one can understand her. Lahiri represents what she understands by seeing the victim.

Although Lahiri as a second generation who grew up in the USA, she represents the traumatic experiences and suffering of diasporas by her own observation or transmitted knowledge. The way she represents the incidents happened

in the life of diaspora in the text is an affiliation of postmemory. This memory she gets from observing the others and through the archive. In an interview she has said:

[...] my parents and their friends all share a fundamental experience: an upbringing in India, a rupture from that country, coming over here, struggling with the language, struggling with the customs, struggling with the ways, do I wear a sari or not. All that stuff binds them. Though my friendships and my relationships are very fierce and very close, there's often something that tends to separate me from many of the people I'm closest to in the world. (13-14)

It clearly explains Lahiri's observation of the family member. She recognizes the stuff that binds her parents and their friends through ancestral homeland belongings like sari or language they used to speak. She comes to know the struggles of her parents and their friends through her observation. She has witnessed the suffering and the grief of the survivors of partition through the parents and their relatives. As Hirsch and Nancy argue "the family becomes not only the site of memorial transmission and continuity across generations but also a trope of loss, longing, and the desire for home" (8). The family is a major source of memorial transmission that impacts on the generation who experienced it. The extract explores the writer who comes to know about her roots and also the suffering, loneliness and desire for a home of her parents that shows the transmission of knowledge. Family is not only the site of memory transmission but also the way of longing and belonging. Visiting Calcutta, Lahiri feels that she has an emotional attachment with it. It becomes the continuity of loss, longing and desire for home even the later generation. Thus, Lahiri artistically represents the understanding of those diasporas and their suffering in her stories and her desire for the ancestral land.

Likewise, *Mrs Sen* is a story that represents the psychological dislocation of the immigrants. The writer articulates the difficulty of the first generation and the remembrances of ancient culture and tradition. The writer portrays the unspeakable loss through the child, Eliot. Although he does not belong to Miss Sen's family, his observation, understanding, confusion and dilemmas are the reflection of the first generation suffering and struggle. It reflects the Affiliative Postmemory in the text. In this context, Hirsch adds "...received memory is distinct from the recall of contemporary witnesses and participants" (106). Received memory not only the process of receiving but also associates with the contemporary life or world whereas recall memory is just remembering the events. Recall memory functions like memorizing the events but received memory functions on remembering and understanding through the present situation. In the story, the smell or aroma of the fish and the kitchen trigger her memories. Those things help to recall the memories of Miss Sen that makes her nostalgic and feeling of isolation too in the host country but the memory received by Eliot makes him emotional even though it is not related to him. The victim or experienced one can recall the memory but other who received the memory witness or experiences the incidents through the observation. Lahiri reflects the longing and belonging of diasporas in the host country. Similarly, through the child character's observation of those suffering of the first-generation diasporas reveal the losses and the isolation of the diasporas.

Lahiri shows the arrangement of the room that reflects the Indian culture as: 'The lobby was tilted in unattractive squares of tan, with a row of mailboxes marked with masking tape or white labels' (112). Miss Sen's house is arranged like an Indian house. She always refers to West Bengal as home. She usually cries inside the room after locking it. She feels isolated in the host country. In this way, the writer shows the

loneliness of Indian immigrants and the pain they bear in the host country. This is the reflection of the understanding of the writer, the desire of homeland of an earlier generation, and also emotional attachments of the second generation.

Furthermore, Eliot visits Mrs. Sen's compartment and becomes always surprised. He knows that Miss Sen is always nostalgic when she looks anything concerned with India. Through the observation of Eliot, the writer shows the feeling of alienation, up rootedness of earlier generation and struggling life in a foreign land. When she works in a Kitchen, she remembers the functions and celebration. Through all these incidents in the story, the writer explores the comprehensions of the earlier generation and the struggling and loneliness. In the story, the remembrance is reflected when Miss. Sen explains to Eliot –

Whenever there is a wedding in the family,' she told to Eliot one day. 'or a large celebration of any kind, my mother sends outward in the evening for all the neighbourhood women to bring blades just like this one, and then they sit in an enormous circle on the roof of our building, laughing and gossiping and slicing fifty kilos of vegetables through the night. (115)

Her remembrances make her isolated and look gloomy. She remembers the celebration of West Bengal but in the host country, there is no neighbour or such celebration. She feels uncomfortable in a foreign land. Portraying remembrance of the diaspora in the story presents the attachment of the writer to the ancestral land. The writer portrays the real situation of immigrants through Miss Sen story as in the story Miss Sen expresses her sorrow to Eliot –“She passed to look pine tree framed by the living room window. Here in this place where Mrs. Sen has brought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in so much silence” (115). The writer depicts the pain of Mrs. Sen and the awful aloofness in a foreign country. Here, Lahiri has projected the first generation

diaspora's suffering. The writer illustrates the innermost aloofness in the story. The protagonist of the story feels alienated in a foreign land. She is always nostalgic when she remembers her past life in India. She thinks that she is lost in a new unknown world in America. Though she has comfort, remains alone, alienated forever.

Likewise, *The Third and Final Continent* is a different story which is based on the struggling life of her father. From this story, she portrays the immigrants and their struggle for existence in three continents. The story talks about the immigrants and their memories of Bengal. The immigrants try to fit in the host country but the different incidents and things make them nostalgic and remember their ancestral land. Adaptation and assimilation of foreign cultural and life style become very difficult to them. In this way, the suffering of the immigrants in the host country represents in the story.

Under the topic '*Biographies Collected Throughout the Web*' illustrates that the protagonist of Lahiri's story "The Third and Final Continent" is based on her father (220). Her father immigrated to London and the United States. Her family immigrates to the United States when Lahiri was three years old. In the same context, the narrator of the story also immigrates to abroad for study and job.

Through the story, Lahiri has artistically explained about the struggling life of the Indian immigrants. The story she has adopted through her father's life. Her post memorial task leads her to reveal the family history of her father as Hirsch articulates in *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*, "Postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through projection, investment, and creation" (22). The struggling of the diaspora to establish in the host country is represented through her Postmemorial work. Lahiri represents the story through the postmemorial

work that she has got from her parents, their friends and her own observation.

According to Hirsch:

Postmemorial work, I want to suggest ... strives to reactivate and re-embody more distant political and cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression. In these ways, less directly affected participants can become engaged in the generation of postmemory that can persist even after all participants and even their familial descendants are gone. (100)

Lahiri did not experience partition and Pakistani civil war. She did not have the first hand experiences of struggling in the host country as her parents. But, she expresses negotiating between her own lived experiences and her parents and their friends' experiences of partition and struggling in the host country. Though, her stories are post memorial aesthetic expression. It reveals the combination “of ambivalence and desire, mourning and recollection, presence and absence” (101) as Hirsch explained in *Post memory in Exile*. It simultaneously conveys Lahiri’s recollections of parents and their friend’s experiences of leaving their homeland and traumatic experience of Partition, shows her desire to connect with ancestral land left behind by her family.

The Familial and Affiliative transmission helps to work on this story *The Third and Final Continent*. The writer got the knowledge of experiences of her father that is familial memory transmission and her emotional attachment towards the ancestral land and her feeling of belongingness is an affiliative transmission of memory. The memory of partition and traumatic experiences that she has presented through the story is affiliative post memory.

In the story, *The Third and Final Continent*, the narrator says “I lived in North London, in Finsbury parkin a house occupied entirely by penniless Bengali

bachelors like myself, at least a dozen and sometimes more, all struggling to educate and establish ourselves abroad” (173). Lahiri’s father was also immigrating to London to study and work. Here, the narrator is a married man as Lahiri’s father. It also shows the glimpses of the immigrants who migrate in search of a secure and better life. After the Indian subcontinent partition, many people migrate to the UK, USA and other parts of the world for a secured life. The partition and its aftermath deeply rooted in the psyche of people and they felt unsecured life in the country though they migrated to other countries. As Lahiri’s father, the narrator is alone in abroad and tries to adjust his life in an unknown land.

This story also shows there are many people who immigrate like the narrator. He also learns that many of them are Bengali. As a narrator of the story, Lahiri’s father also immigrates to the United States for his job and settled there. Though, it represents through the narrator when he declares “I learned that Americans drove on the right side of the road, not the left and that they called a life an elevator and an engaged phone busy” (174). The narrator describes his new life and suffering in a new country, the United States of America. He expresses the difficulty that he faces in a new continent – “Even the simple chore of buying milk was new to me; in London, we’d had bottled delivered each morning to our door” (175). The narrator tries to establish a new life in a host country but he has negatively experienced. All these incidents that happened in the life of the narrator in the story are related to Lahiri’s Father.

The story reveals that the narrator remembers his family and the incidents that happened in his life while he was in his country. Lahiri portrays her post memory that she got from her father through the narrator memory. In the story, Mrs. Croft always repeated the incident that America first stepped on the surface of the Moon. And this

reminded the narrator of his own country. Simply repeated dialogue tigers the narrator memory and he remembers his country. The narrator asserts:

it reminded me of the way I was taught multiplication tables as a child, repeating after the master, sitting cross-legged, without shoes or pencils, on the floor of my one-room tolly gunge school. It also reminded me of my wedding, when I had repeated endlessly. Sanskrit after the priest verses, I barely understood, which joined me to my wife. (180)

This extract explains the first-hand experiences of the narrator. He remembers the incidents that took place in his life from his childhood to the wedding ceremony. The narrator immigrates to America from London and meets a widow Mrs. Croft and her activity makes him nostalgic. The narrator works in a library as Lahiri's father in America and she artistically represents it. The narrator remembers his mother through Mrs. Croft who has a daughter Helen. Mrs. Croft is a widow and is above a hundred years old and her daughter aged seventy-nine. The narrator considers Mrs. Croft like his mother. When his wife Mala arrives in the United States, he cares her and they follow the Indian way of life like eating by hands instead of a spoon.

In the story, the narrator explains that they are adjusting in a foreign country but, still they get an isolated feeling. He explains – “Like me, Mala had travelled far from home, not knowing where she was going or what she would find for no reason other than to be my wife” (195). This shows the isolation of his wife too. This story reveals the struggle of Lahiri's father and mother in the host country. The writer also represents their longing and belonging for home through the story. Lahiri shows the feeling of loneliness, dissociation and the grief of being stranger in the foreign land of her parents through this story. The question is how it is possible for Lahiri to represent the diasporas suffering as her own lived experiences. This is a quality that second

generation writer or artists got from the transmission of the memory of an earlier generation. It is an experience of transgenerational. In this way, Lahiri's frequent visit to Calcutta, observing her parents, their friends and other diasporas and archive is the source of her post memory which she represents through the story.

Lahiri explains the layers of the pain and grief of immigrant that also reveal the cultural and individual crises. In those four stories, she represents what she witnessed and got by observing the earlier generation. As, a second generation, she explores her understanding and articulates it through the story. As Hirsch argues "... memory can be transmitted to those who were not actually there to live an event" (106). She has represented all events as it is though it gives the sense of like writer's actual suffering as the victim in those four stories. The second generation of immigrants as Lahiri embraces the American culture as their native culture but they are also affected by their ancestral culture and tradition. By observing parents' suffering and their friends, the second generation like Lahiri has some sort of emotional attachments with their ancestral land. Such attachment of the diasporas which has arouse through the transmitted knowledge hunts them. Lahiri argues in an interview:

I went to Calcutta neither as a tourist nor a former resident – a valuable position [...] yet I also knew that as different Calcutta is from Rhode Island, I belonged there in some fundamental way in the ways I didn't seem to belong in the United States. The reason my first stories were set in Calcutta is due partly because of the perspective, that necessary combination of distance and intimacy with a place. (22)

The above extract explains Lahiri's attachment with Calcutta and it may be exploring the connection of Lahiri to Bangladesh. She feels that she is emotionally attached to

the land of the Indian subcontinent. In the essay *Rites of Return*, Hirsch and Nancy say “going back to the city of origin, however, is a way of coming to grips with the mythic dimensions of a place they would have to apprehend on new terms” (12). For Lahiri, going back to ancestral land becomes a new sense of understanding it. She listens about the place through her parents but her own visits give her new dimension to think about it. She feels she has an emotional attachment with the place.

By observing and through transmitted knowledge, she becomes able to represent the experiences of her through the stories. In her essay *Rites of Return*, Hirsch and Nancy argue: “one has inherited through familial memory as a “wounded identification,” the writer must grapple with two levels of return: her entrance into a world by way of another’s story and her own political views of that world’s history from another location and its politics” (12). Lahiri represents her fathers’ story through Bengali character and she portrays her own understating of the partition violence and suffering of the diasporas in the host country. Here, Lahiri explores the historical incidents and the events related to Indian subcontinent through stories and the characters.

Despite the fact that Lahiri grew up in a different environment as a member of a post-partition generation of diaspora, she has investigated the aspects of the event related to partition, post-partition and diasporas in the host country. Her approaches in making a deep connection to earlier generations’ suffering do possess the insights of suffering even though she does not possess the real experiences. Her artistic representation expresses the inherited memories and posts memories that helps in bringing the historical incidents into the present and shows the continuous effect of the partition to the next generation. The analysis of the selected short stories in this research focuses on the transmitted knowledge which is transferred to the next

generation through inter- and transgenerational acts of transfer. Through the lens of postmemory, Lahiri represents the family and other experiences during and after the partition and also, the ways of observing diasporas' suffering.

Hirsch's framework is the lens to investigate inherited memories and transmitted memories and it is beneficial to investigate the understanding of inter- and transgenerational transmission and historical incidents like a partition. This technique also helps in presenting the historical events and the suffering of others in the text. As the history of Indian subcontinent partition left indelible scars, it is transferred from generation to generation that is represented in the artistic work of their descendants.

Second generation diaspora writers have written about the individual and transgenerational transmission of knowledge. They explore how postmemory is related to the suffering of an earlier generation of diaspora and its continuous effects like emotional attachment to their ancestral homeland, longing and belonging and painful feeling. Also, the partition of the Indian subcontinent has continuously affected them and their families. These representations are their emotional attachment towards their ancestral country and the continuous transmission of memory to the later generation.

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