**COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**

*Comparative study between Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine and Jhumpa Lahiri’s Namesake*

INTRODUCTION

Comparative Literature is a fast growing discipline. This field has attracted many of the scholars to research and make a comparative study in different literatures. According to H. H. Remak, Even then it is not easy to define comparative literature. Bijay Kumar puts it in simple words, saying “Comparative literature analyses the similarity and parallels between two literatures”. The thesis deals with the comparative study of the themes of Bharati Mukherjee’s *Jasmine* and Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Namesake*. Analyzing a literature based on the themes enhances the quality of reading and understanding of the work.

A comparative study is intended to appreciate the sense of understanding of the themes and structures under discussion. Comparison of the selected authors and their works for comparison leads to the realization of the universality of human behavior and experience. The given women writers have dealt with different themes and structures in their novels. The remarks from such a study can be acceptable, authentic and reliable. Thus, the comparative study becomes necessary to analyse the structure and themes used in the given novels.

The comparative study is based on the similarities and dissimilarities between the themes and stuctures of the given novels. The theme is the central idea or message on a piece of work. Various themes to be dealt are Relationship between Parents and Children, Name and Identity, Language Barrier, Alienation, United States India, Tension between life and death Nostalgia. ‘Comparative Literature’ implies a study of literature which uses comparison as its main instrument. The comparative analysis is made to study literature not in isolation but in comparison.

THE NATURE OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

The present century is pre-eminently suitable for studies in comparative literature. The

purpose of such study is to discover the common areas among the various literatures. This is a

kind of co-ordination which seeks resemblance in some respects. In fact all great writings look to their own times and also look forward and backward. The process of comparison is a natural function of the reason. Even in our everyday life, comparison is implicit in our response and behavior. It thus seems to be a normal and inevitable mental process. Hence the study and appreciation of literature in a sense is always comparative.

MOTIVES OF COMPARATIVE STUDY

 The motives of the study of comparative literature can be various. However, it is done with a view to use it as the most useful technique of analyzing the work of art. One can recognize the qualities of a work more effectively by comparing it to other works in different languages. Secondly one can take a balanced view of literary merit. Thirdly, literature cannot be a separate entity and so it must be studied in relation to other literatures. Comparative literary study aims at studying different national traditions. A set of characteristics may not be found in a single individual in that country and in the study of comparative literature such ideal types can be taken into consideration. Thus an attempt can be made to define the spirit of the nation reflected in the language and literature.

IMPORTANCE OF COMPARATIVE STUDY IN MODERN PERIOD

 In the modern period of multiculturalism comparative cultural studies play a vital role. In the background of globalization comparative studies help a lot and it has become an intellectual discipline. Comparative studies of a substantial help to the academic research language and literature. If you considered the initial efforts in this field in India and Abroad, two prominent names come to our mind. One is eminent European writer Goethe and the other is the Nobel Laureate and artist Ravindranath Tagore from India. In 1906, Tagore used the term ‘Viswa Sahitya’ for comparative literature, Goethe initiated the idea when he coined the term ‘Walt Litaratur’ for the study of literatures of different countries together.

 Comparative literature should include the open ended possibility to study literatures. Various aspects of literature like linguistic rigor and historical background of the literary texts are helpful for us to compare two or more literary works for comparison. So far Indian ethos is concerned, it is more conducive to practice comparative literature because according to the Indian philosophy, the individual and the particular is realized and is grounded in the universal. The essence of the individual is no more than the universal.

 Comparative study of literatures is primarily a study of similarities and differences. All these studies of similarity and differences aim at creating a universal structure of oneness. Initially, the comparative literature was accepted as a universal category. However, many literary critics and historians opposed this notion of universal construct, how so ever formalistic study of literary works might keep corporatists away from history. Comparative literature crosses the border of the language and culture. Here the literatures from Indian English Literature are compared to learn the qualities of the works of the Indian origin authors in foreign land.

INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

The beginning of the novel lay in the medieval romance of fantastic tale of the love and journey, derived from the ballads and fragments of epic poems. In 1350 Boccaccio wrote a famous collection of love stories in prose entitled *Decameron*. Such short stories are called ‘novella’ in Italian. The term originally meant a fresh story but signify a song in prose as distinguished from a song in verse, which continued to be called a romance. When prose became almost the universal medium, the term ‘Romance’ implied a story or series of stories of the legendry past of which Mory’s Morte d’ *Author* is a famous example. It is often used to describe a historical novel which is internally picturesque and exciting rather than scholarly.

It is more formally defined as a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of factious people. Meredith called it ‘a summary of actual life’, including both the within or without of us. Fielding loosely characterized it as a comic epic in prose. It is the loosest literary art but its very freedom from all limitations allows it to give a fuller representation of real life and character than anything else can provide. A novel like a play has a plot and to a great extent its characters reveal themselves in dialogue. The writer, but must depend on what he can make us to see hear for ourselves although, the novelist can describe what could never be presented on any stage.

The works which are written in Indian by the writers in India are called Indian literature. The earliest works of Indian literature were orally transmitted. The Sanskrit epics Ramayana and Mahabharata appeared towards end of the first millennium BCE, as did the first Tamil Sangam literature. Telugu literature appeared in the 9th and 11th centuries respectively later, literature in Marathi, Bengali, and various dialects of Hindi, Persian and Urdu began to appear early in 20th century. Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore became India’s first Nobel Prize winner for literature.

STYLE OF INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

 Indian Writers have excelled in the handling of the native British English and have indianised the contexts of the language. There is creativity in all the writings of the Indian English writers. It has often reflected the struggle of an Indian, cultural conflicts, survival for existence, emotional breakdowns, social and family oppressions and more are given in a foreign tongue. The works of the Indian writers have carried the culture, tradition and characteristic features of India to the other countries.

WRITERS OF INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

 Besides the renowned and vastly honoured Indian English literary personalities like Rabindranath Tagore (*Sadhana*) or R K Narayan ( *Malgudi days*), later novelists like Kamala Markandaya (*Nectar in a Sieve, Some Inner Fury, A Silence of Desire, Two Virgins*), Manohar Malgaonkar (*Distant Drum, Combat of Shadows, The Princes, A Bend in the Ganges and The Devil`s Wind*), Anita Desai (*Clear Light of Day, The Accompanist, Fire on the Mountain, Games at Twilight*) and Nayantara Sehgal, have ceaselessly captured the spirit of an independent India struggling to break away from the British and traditional Indian cultures and establish a distinct identity.

 During the 1980`s and 90`s, India had emerged as a major literary nation. Salman Rushdie`s *Midnight`s Children* had become a rage around the world, even winning the Booker Prize. The worldwide success of Rushdie`s *Midnight`s Children* made him the first writer of the Indian Diaspora to enter the sphere of elite international writers and leave an indelible mark on the global literary scene. Other Indian English literature Novelists of reputation of the contemporary times include - V.S. Naipaul, Shobha De (*Selective Memory*), G.V. Desani, M Ananthanarayanan, Bhadani Bhattacharya, Arun Joshi, Khushwant Singh, O.V. Vijayan, Allan Sealy (*The Trotternama*), Sashi Tharoor (*Show Business, The Great Indian Novel*), Amitav Ghosh (*Circle of Reason, Shadow Lines*) and others.

 The writer in the genre of Indian English literature, who took the world with a storm, was Arundhati Roy, whose *The God of Small Things* won the 1997 Booker Prize and became an international best-seller overnight. Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Kiran Desai (*Strange Happenings in the Guava Orchard*), Sudhir Kakar (*The Ascetic of Desire*), Ardeshir Vakil (*Beach Boy*) and Jhumpa Lahiri (*Interpreter of Maladies*) are some other renowned writers of Indian origin. Former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao`s *The* *Insider*; Satish Gujral`s *A Brush with Life*; R.K. Laxman`s *The Tunnel of Time*, Prof. Bipin Chandra`s *India After Independence*, Sunil Khilnani`s *The Idea of India*, J.N. Dixit`s *Fifty Years of India`s Foreign Policy*, Yogesh Chadha`s *Rediscovering Gandhi* and Pavan K.Varma`s *The Great Indian Middle Class*, are also outstanding works.

 The mid-20th century Indian literature in English had witnessed the emergence of poets such as Nissim Ezekiel (*The Unfurnished Man*), P Lal, A K Ramanujan (*The Striders, Relations, Second Sight, Selected Poems*), Dom Moraes (*A Beginning*), Keki .N . Daruwalla, Geive Patel who were profoundly influenced by literary movements taking place in the West, like Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, Absurdism and Confessional Poetry. These authors heavily had made use of Indian phrases alongside English words and had tried to reproduce a blend of the Indian and the Western cultures.

LIFE AND WORKS OF JHUMPA LAHIRI

Nilanjana Sudeshna Jhumpa Lahiri Bengali born on July 11, 1967 is an American author. Lahiri has been selected as the winner of the 29th PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short story. Lahiri's debut short story collection [*Interpreter of Maladies*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpreter_of_Maladies) (1999) won the 2000 [Pulitzer Prize for Fiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulitzer_Prize_for_Fiction), and her first novel, [*The Namesake*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Namesake)(2003), was adapted into the popular [film of the same name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Namesake_%28film%29). She was born Nilanjana Sudeshna but goes by her nickname Jhumpa. Lahiri was a member of the [President's Committee on the Arts andHumanities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President%27s_Committee_on_the_Arts_and_Humanities), appointed by U.S. President [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama). She resigned from the President's Committee in August, 2017 co-signing a letter of resignation that said in reference to President Trump, "Ignoring your hateful rhetoric would have made us complicit in your words and actions." Her book [*The Lowland*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lowland), published in 2013, was a nominee for the [Man Booker Prize](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_Booker_Prize)and the [National Book Award for Fiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Book_Award_for_Fiction). Lahiri is currently a professor of creative writing at [Princeton University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princeton_University).

 Jhumpa Lahiri’s first novel is *The namesake*. It was originally a novel published in The New Yorker and was later expanded to a full – length novel. The story spans over thirty year’s life of the Ganguli family. Their parents were born in Calcutta and immigrated to United States. Their children were Gogol and Sonia. He was developing and experiencing the continuous generational and cultural gap with parents. Ashoke met with an accident in the train he travelled. He was reading a book writte by Gogol at that time. So, he selected the name to his son. He followed a foreign culture. His father gave a dairy, but did not read. Gogol was continuing to work as an architect in New York. Sonia settled to a family and married the man named Ben. One day his father died. Gogol found the dairy of his father and read. He started to love the custom of his family and lived like his father.

*The Namesake* explores many of the same emotional and cultural themes as her Pulitzer Prize winning short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* moving between events in Calcutta, Boston, and New York City, the novel examines the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with highly distinct religious, social and ideological differences.

She has won the first award Trans-Atlantic Award from the Hen field Foundation 1993. Her second award [O. Henry Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O._Henry_Award) for short story *Interpreter of Maladies* 1999. Third award *Interpreter of Maladies* was selected as one of *Best American Short Stories 1999*. Addis won Metcalf Award from the [American Academy of Arts and Letters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Academy_of_Arts_and_Letters) 2000. *The Third and Final Continent* was selected as one of *Best American Short Stories 2000*. [The New Yorker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Yorker)'s Best Debut of the Year for *Interpreter of Maladies* 2000. [Pulitzer Prize for Fiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulitzer_Prize_for_Fiction) for her debut *Interpreter of Maladies* 2000. [James Beard Foundation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Beard_Foundation)'s M.F.K. Fisher Distinguished Writing Award for *Indian Takeout* was in [Food & Wine Magazine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_%26_Wine_Magazine) 2000.  [Guggenheim Fellowship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guggenheim_Fellows)2002. *Nobody's Business* selected as one of *Best American Short Stories 2002*.   [Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_O%27Connor_International_Short_Story_Award) for *Unaccustomed Earth* 2008.  [Asian American Literary Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_American_Literary_Award) for *Unaccustomed Earth* 2009. Premio Gregor von Rezzori for foreign fiction translated into Italian for *Unaccustomed Earth* translated by Federica Oddera 2009. [DSC Prize for South Asian Literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DSC_Prize_for_South_Asian_Literature) for *The Lowland* 2014. Her last award was [National Humanities Medal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Humanities_Medal) 2014.

Navigating between the Indian traditions they've natural and the unsolved new world, the characters in Jhumpa Lahiri's smart, touching stories seek love beyond the fences of culture and generations. In *A Temporary Matter* published in The New Yorker, a young Indian-American couple faces the heartbreak of a still born birth while their Boston neighborhood copes with a nightly blackout. In the title story, an interpreter guides an American family through the India of their ancestors and hears an astonishing confession. Lahiri writes with deft cultural insight reminiscent of Anita Desai and a nuanced depth that recalls Mavis Gallant. She is an important and powerful new voice.

Knopf Canada is proud to welcome this bestselling, Pulitzer Prize winning author with eight impressive stories that take us from Cambridge and Seattle to India and Thailand as they search the secrets at the heart of family life. In the unusual title story, Ruma, a young mother in a new city, is visited by her father who carefully tends her garden where she later unearths evidence of a love affair he is keeping to himself. In *A Choice of Spaces*, a couple's romantic getaway weekend takes a dark turn at a party that lasts deep into the night. In *Only Goodness*, a woman eager to give her younger brother the perfect childhood she never had is overcome by guilt, pain and anger when his drunkenness bullies her family. And in *Hema and* *Kaushik*, a trio of linked stories a bright, powerfully compelling elegy of life, death, love and fate we follow the lives of a girl and boy who, one fateful winter, share a house in Massachusetts. They travel from innocence to experience on separate, sometimes painful paths, until destiny brings them together again years later in Rome. *Unaccustomed Earth* is rich with the author's signature gifts: exquisite prose, emotional wisdom and understated renderings of the most difficult workings of the heart and mind. It is the work of a writer at the peak of her powers.

An international best seller and finalist for the Man Booker Prize and the National Book Award, *The Lowland* is a powerful novel from Pulitzer Prize winner and New York Times bestselling author Jhumpa Lahiri. Two brothers bound by tragedy, a fiercely brilliant woman haunted by her past, a country torn by revolution set in both India and America. *The Lowland* explores the price of idealism, and a love that can last long past death. Now in paperback. Growing up in Calcutta, born just 15 months apart, Subhash and Udayan Mitra are inseparable brothers, one often mistaken for the other. But they are also opposites, with gravely different futures forward of them. It is the 1960s, and Udayan charismatic and spontaneous finds himself drawn to the Naxalite movement, a revolution waged to remove inequity and poverty. He will give everything, risk all, for what he believes.

Subhash, the dutiful son, does not share his brother's political passion. He leaves home to pursue a life of scientific research in a quiet, coastal corner of America. But when Subhash learns what happened to his brother in the lowland outside their family's home, he comes back to India, hoping to pick up the pieces of a shattered family, and to heal the wounds Udayan left behind including those seared in the heart of his brother's wife. Suspenseful, sweeping, piercingly intimate, The Lowland expands the range of one of our most dazzling storytellers, seamlessly interweaving the historical and the personal across generations and geographies. This masterly novel of fate and will, exile and return, is a tour de force and an instant classic.

LIFE AND WORKS OF BHARATI MUKHERJEE

Bharati Mukherjee was born on July 27, 1940 to Sudhir Lal, a pharmaceutical chemist and Bina Mukherjee, a housewife in Calcutta, India; then moved to Britain in 1947 with her family and lived in Europe for about three and a half years. Mukherjee realized at age of ten that she wanted to become a writer and had written numerous short stories. In 1951 the family returned to Calcutta and she joined the English speaking Loreto convent school run by Irish nuns. Mukherjee and her sisters were chauffeured to the convent school quite and characteristic of this clash of "westernized" Bengali family may be seen in the sense that English education was valued.

In 1958 Mukherjee's father lost his partnership in the factory and moved his family to Baroda. She obtained B.A. from the University of Calcutta in 1959 and her M.A. in English and Ancient Indian Culture from the University of Baroda in 1961 and went to the United States of America. She has earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing in 1963 and Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature in 1969. While studying at the University of Iowa she met Clark Blaise: a Canadian student from Harvard and married with him on September 19, 1963. She lived in Canada from 1966 to 1980. She got Canadian citizenship and lived in Toronto and then in Montreal. She held teaching portions at MC Gill University and Concordia University.

As a professor and wife of Clark Blaise, Mukherjee got opportunities to teach all over the United States and Canada. She migrated to the U.S.A. in 1980 with her family and became a U.S.A citizen in 1988. Mukherjee's career is as Instructor in English, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: 1964-65, and University of Wisconsin, Madison: 1965; Lecturer: 1966-69, Assistant Professor: 1969-73, Associate Professor: 1973-78, and Professor: 1978, McGill University, Montreal. Professor, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York; Associate Professor, Montclair State College, New Jersey: 1984-87; Queen's College, City University of New York, Flushing: 1987-89; Professor, University of California, Berkeley: 1990-95. During the end of her career she was a professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Her husband Clark Blaise is an American - Canadian author who teaches also in the English department of Columbia University. They have two sons together, Bart Anand and Bernard Sudhir.

Mukherjee had established herself as a powerful member of the American literary scene, one whose most memorable works reflect her pride in her Indian heritage, but also her celebration of embracing America. Bharati Mukherjee was one of the most prominent with the Asian immigrant Experience in America. Her fiction explores “the nature of American identity, through the perspective of an illegal immigrant” says Dinah Birch (2009). Her novels also represent a quest for identity. She is an eminent writer of the Indian diaspora. Most of her novels mainly *Jasmine* and *Desirable Daughters* symbioses the Indian migrants through the characters.

Bharati Mukherjee’s women protagonists are immigrants who suffer cultural shock but they are potential women anxious to establish their identity. Most of her novels are predominant with feministic views. In Bharathi Mukherjee’s first novel *The Tiger’s Daughter*, the protagonist Tara Banerjee returns to India after seven years stay in America. The story is drawn on Mukherjee’s own experience and those of her sisters who had gone to study in America. When Tara land at Bombay airport, she is not comfortable with her relatives. Tara’s Bombay relatives cannot accept a woman who is not accompanied by her husband, David. According to Indian tradition, a man should lead the woman. He plays a protective role. Travelling alone, living alone and moving alone are part of unfamiliarity in many parts of India.

In Indian tradition, one should marry in his own caste. If anyone marries from another caste, he will be treated as an outcast or a sinner. But the protagonist Tara violates these rules and marries a foreign man who is a Jew. She totally forgets her caste and religion through her marriages. Ironically, Mukherjee makes a criticism of the conservative attitude of the Indians who are crazy of foreign things and clothes, but they do not appeal of marriage with foreign people. In the presence of her mother, Tara feels alienated. Within herself, Tara becomes mentally turbulent and makes her return to the USA. Thus, in the first novel one finds the feeling of alienation of Tara.

 In her second novel *Wife*, the protagonist Dimple wants to break through the traditional taboos of a wife. This novel tells the story of Dimple, a seemingly docile young Bengali girl who, as any other normal girl, is full of dreams about her married life and so she eagerly and impatiently waits for marriage. She marries Amit Basu. She visualizes a new life for herself in America where Amit is expecting to immigrate. She is expected to play the role of an ideal Indian wife, stay at home and keep the house for the husband. Her frustration is built up gradually by the circumstances. She resents being wife in the Basu family and rebels against wifedom in many ways. One such way includes a miscarriage by skipping herself free from her pregnancy, which she views as a Basu’s property even in her womb. But her self-identity is avoided by marriage.

She aspires to self-recognition and dream fulfillment. But Basu behaves in a different way. He wants her to be docile and submissive. So Dimple hates Basu and his behavior. He needs her only for sexual harassment. She feels it's a sort guilty. Finally, in her mentally upset state, she kills Amit in an act of self-liberation and eventually commits suicide.

 The third and most accomplished novel *Jasmine* is an account of adaptation and not a defeat. It is the story of a Punjabi rural girl, Jyothi. Prakash an active and excited young man enters into Jyothi’s life as her husband. When Prakash prepares to go to America she says, “I’ll go with you and if you leave me, I’ll fence into a well”. A woman has to accept the track of her husband, renamed as Jasmine, joyously sharing the ambition of her husband. She looks forward going to America a land of opportunities, even this dream gets to suffer by the murder of Prakash on the eve of his leaving. She decides to go to America and fulfill Prakash’s mission and perform “Sati”. Having learned to “Walk and Talk” like an American, she grabs every opportunity to become American. Jasmine becomes Jane. At the end she kills Sukhawinder, the Khalsa lion who killed Prakash. After that she goes to Iowa, assuming a new name “Jane”.

The manifold facets or roles played by Jasmine as Jane and Jane assault the power in woman. This power can be equal to Sakthi which is command over quality that destroys and fights against all evils. Jasmine has broken away from the shackles of caste, gender and family. She has learnt to live not for her husband or for her children but herself. Jasmine is a survivor, a fighter and an adaptor. She figures against Unfavorable circumstances, comes out a winner and carves out a new life in an alien country.

Bharathi Mukherjee’s succeeding novel *The Holder of the World* reinforces expatriation as a Journey of the human mind. Like Jasmine, who travels westward, Hannah Estean’s Voyage to the Orient tells us the protagonist’s latest tensions, aspirations and ambitions. Hannah is born in Massachusetts who travels to India. She becomes involved with a few Indian lovers and eventually a king who gives her a diamond known as true Emperor’s Tear. The story is told as the detective’s searching for the diamond and Hannah’s view point. The physical journey of the female hero, not only leads to probing of the self, but also makes her recognize the side of herself. She returns to her native land, not as a reformed American but a rebel living on the fringes of society.

 In her next novel, *Leave it to me*, Bharathi Mukherjee tells the story of a young woman sociopath named Debby Dimartino, short name Debi who seeks revenge on parents who abandoned her. The story reveals her ungrateful interaction with kind adoptive parents and a vengeful search for her real parents. The novel also looks at the conflict between Eastern and Western worlds and at mother-daughter relationships through the political and emotional involvement of the chief character in her quest for revenge.

Bharathi Mukherjee’s latest novel *Desirable Daughters* is a tale of immigrants and the attitude of three sisters and their ways of dealing with situations. *Desirable Daughters* as the title suggests, one kind of daughter, which parents would be proud of and for whom every parent would crave. The three sisters, who are the daughters of Motilal Bhattacharya and the great-grand-daughters of Jai Krishna Gangooli, belong to a traditional Bengali Brahmin family.

Padma, Parvathi and Tara are symbolic names of Shakti do not flaunt the same ethical values but have the grit to carve a niche for them. They are a blend of traditional and modern outlook. Padma and Parvathi do not regret their choices, the former an immigrant of ethnic origin in New Jersey, and the latter married to a boy of her own choice and settled in the plush locality of Bombay with an encouragement of servants to catch her. Tara, the narrator of the novel marries Bishwa Priya Chatterjee, goes on arranged marriage. Tara finds that her married life is not fulfilling and she walks out of her traditional life, a typical American divorce settlement follows. Tara works as a volunteer in a pre-school. She enjoys her love life with Andy. Tara sends his son with his father as a divorce settlement. The fluidity of her identity, testifies not only his own but also the fluidity of the immigrants. Finally Tara returns to her father’s house for solace. This novel to a certain extent seems to be the autobiography of Bharathi Mukherjee who has two sisters.

Bharathi Mukherjee’s last novel is *The Tree Bride*. Here the root-search links the past incidents with the present happenings of Tara’s life of *Desirable Daughters*. The search to find out the identity of her stalker leads to several revelations. The plot of *The Tree Bird* moves back and forth from colonial India of the pre-independence times to San Francisco and back. She was awarded the national book critics circle Award in 1988 for ‘the middleman and other stories’. Her novels also feature the undercurrents of violence other than cultural clashes.

*A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN THEMES IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE’S JASMINE AND JHUMPA LAHIRI’S THE NAMESAKE*

CULTURAL IDENTITY

The novel *jasmine* whose opening phase is life time ago under a banyan tree in the village of Hasnapur, an astrologer cupped his ears. Her settlement dish to the stars and expected her widowhood and outcast. She was only seven then, fast and bold flaky provided from leaves and points. The state of outcast, a sense of loss, the pain of Farwell and confusion makes Bharati Mukherjee’s novel *jasmine* ‘a quest for root’ in an alien land. *Jasmine* the character of the novel. Suffers some changes during the journey of her life in America from Jyothi to *Jasmine* to Jazz to Jane to Jase, and frequently understandings deep sense of separation which results in a fluid state at identity.

*Jasmine* was seventeen year old village girl. A medium for casts of her eventual widowhood and outcast, under a Banyan tree in Hasnapur. She is a dowry less girl. Her family makes to poverty and hopelessness. Jyothi seeks a modern and educated husband, who keeps faith in dowries and traditions. But she finds a united states based modern thinking man, Prakash. He encouraged her to study English. And he symbolically gave Jyothi a new name *jasmine*, and a new life. He wanted to break down the past:

*I’d been in Hasnapur and make me a new kind of city woman, to break off the past, he gave me a new name; jasmine. He said, “you are small and sweet and heady, my jasmine. You’ll quicken the whole world with your perfume,” Jyothi, jasmine: I shuttled between identities. (77)*

*The Namesake* novel theme was based on the cultural studies which analyze and interpret the object and the social practices outside the realm of literature meanings of which come out is the product of the social forces and conventions. The term cross cultural was introduced by an anthropologist George Peter Murdock in the field of social sciences in the 1930. A cross cultural study is an adaptation of the term cross cultural to describe a brand of literary and cultural studies dealing with the works of writers associated with more than one culture. It comes under Diasporic because it brings out the problems of cross cultural immigrants.

The immigrant people carry a burden of cultural values because they were brought up in a cultural (past and present) which was totally different from present culture, thus making it more difficult and problematic for them to adjust. Normally Indian women were emotional, they want their realties to be aside with them during their first delivery, but in foreign land Ashima feels abnormal. She was ready to bear the physical pain but not ready to force the consequences of the motherhood in a foreign land.

*She is terrified to raise a child in a country where she is related to no one, where she knows so little, where life seems so tentative and spare. (6)*

This journey becomes a tale of moral courage a search for awareness and self-assertion, uprooted from her native land India. Jyothi does her to introduce herself into the new and alien society. In the final chapters it is specified in *Jasmine* about her pregnancy with the child of a white man - Bud.

The story of *Jasmine* begins in India and takes off from Europe to America. It springs back and forth from Florida through New York to proceed to lowa and then finally lands in California. The novel plan transports her in time and spare again and again, bring in a sense of variability into the novel. She was born in Hasnapur in India. Jyothi is different being the most beautiful and clever in the family.

In *The Namesake* Ashima was not even able to eat her favorite food during her pregnancy.

 *Ashima has been consuming this concoction throughout her*

*pregnancy, a humbleapproximation of the snack sold for pennies on Calcutta sidewalks and on railway platforms throughout India, spelling from newspaper cones.(1)*

Grandparent Culture

In India newly born child was handed to their grandparents, before giving to their mother, but here Ashima feels pity for her son, become no relatives are here to take her son.

 *Without a single grandparent or parent uncle or aunt at her side, the baby’s birth, like most everything else in America, feels somehow haphazard, only half true. As she strokes and suckles and studies her son, she can’t help but pity him. She has never known of a person entering the world so alone, so deprived.*

*(24-25)*

In Bengali tradition the name of the new born child was given by their grandmother, but here it was not possible. As in America parents have to give their child a legal name before leaving the hospital. So Ashima has to break away their naming tradition.

 *The sign of respect in America and Europe, this symbol of heritage and*

*lineage, would be ridiculed in India. 1within Bengali families, individual names*

*are sacred, inviolable. They are not meant to be inherited or shared. (28)*

Bengali children were given two names as pet name used by their families and close friends. And good name used by rest of society. Here Ashima’s son was given two names Gogol and his Public name was Nikhil. He wishes to call him Nikhil.

 *She told him she liked it well enough, though later, alone, she’d wept,*

*thinking of her grandmother who had died earlier in the year, and of the letter,*

*forever hovering somewhere between india and America, containing the good*

*name she’d chosen for Gogol (56)*

In Jasmine her change starts from a village girl under shell of her father and brothers to a wife of an American Traditional husband. She is given all liberty. But Jasmine’s happiness is short lived. She is widowed. She returns to her family. She has to choose between the rigid traditions of her family and perform sati, or continue to live the life of *Jasmine* in American. After she achieves a fake passport for going abroad. *Jasmine* set off on a painful trip as an illegal immigrant to Florida, this begins her symbolic trip of transformations, displacement, and a search for identity.

She is trying to adapt to the American way of life. In order to be able to live, changes identity several times. In her trial she faces many problems including rape and eventually reached to the position of healthy professional through a series of jobs. The novel explains the story of a young widow at seventeen. She displaces herself from her life in India. And displaces herself in search of a new life and the image of America as well. It is a story of disorder and transfer as the character continually shakes life to move into other roles, moving further westward.

In J*asmine* protagonist always faces unexpected events. Her marriage at very young age. Her father died by the bull hit. Her husband died from the bomb explosion and she was raped after illegally entering to the United States by the seaman.

According to Indian cultural society Burdenis for woman says, “She has to adjust with the situation without complaining for the sake of her birth place and in-laws home.” Ashima accepts her reality that no one is with her in the new land. She has to be alone in home, when her husband went for work.

SUFFERINGS

As Ashima was in alien country she suffered from sleeplessness. She sits alone and cries for the whole day. Cries when she feeds her son. She cries when post man visit her apartment without any letters from Calcutta. She even cries when she found no response from her husband for her call. She spends most of her time in napping, sulking and rereading the five Bengali novels. Ashima makes more friends in America all where from same background, whose husbands were working as teacher, researcher, doctors and engineers. Immigrant men were busy with their jobs. Whereas their wives were home sick and bewildered. And lonely at home suffer more than their husbands.

Next the story started in the village Baden in Iowa, where Jasmine lives as a middle aged banker’s wife. He got one adoptive Vietnamese child. She has great abilities to adjust to the requirements of a changing environment and to cut the past loose. She has skills. These two allow her to deal with the morals. The culture of two dissimilar worlds and her occurrence with different identities Jyothi and jasmine. Jasmine feels lifeless between the traditional, modern world, controlled and independent love offered by her Indian husband, Prakash.

As well as in *Jasmine* she worried and cried for not having allowed passport in the light of bathroom. Mr. Devinder then she says; she wants a green card more than anything different in the world that a green card is freedom.

 *Why cry? Crying is selfish. We have no husbands, no wives, no fathers, no*

*sons. Family life and family emotions are all illusions. The lord lends us a body,*

*gives us an assignment, and sends us down. When we get the job done, the lord*

*calls us home again for the next assignment (58-59)*

Though they were in Alien land they started to celebrate native’s ceremonies and functions and such functions she recalls and misses her relatives.

 *Ashima’s eyes fill with tears as Gogol’s mouth eagerly invites the spoon.*

*She can’t help wishing her own brother were here to feed him, her own parents to*

*bless him with their hands on his head. (40)*

Ashima learns to celebrate Christmas and starts to celebrate it for the sake of her children, but it was a real challenge for her to teach them about the Indian religious celebrations.

The first generation immigrants nurture the multicultural identity for their next generation. This provides them another means to explore the self and origins. Due to his name Gogol’s unique cultural identity forms the story of identity and self-discovery. Ashoke’s multi-cultural heritage, integrating elements of Russian literature, Bengali culture and American geographical space create a Bengali-American space for Gogol. By inscribing Gogol’s name on a birth certificate, Ashoke textually bestows a cross-cultural identity for him.

In America Jasmine meets Lillian Gordon. She begins her process of assimilation by learning how to become American. Lillian calls her by the nickname jazzy. We can see how is the symbol of her entrance and her acceptance of American culture. She is welcomed gratefully. After that she moves in with a traditional Indian family in hushing, New York.

Jasmine soon finds herself repressed by the sky of this home because it was far remote from everything American. Since, it positively helps for her progress towards a new life. She tries to separate herself from all that is Indian and forgot her past completely. Since she is an Indian girl, people look at her strangely. She fears and does not know go to. As in Baden (a town in lowa) she meets Bud Rippler an American Banker, who instantly falls in love with her. They eventually marry and Bud renames Jasmine as ‘Jane’ yet another sign of her evolution. They both lived together as husband and wife without an official marriage.

PAST AND PRESENT

This is uncommon in Jyothi’s culture but quite common in *Jasmine* to change role from caregiver to professionals. Her culture identity also changes easily in Baden. The crowd community attempts to see her as familiar instead of alien. This new awareness of her is essential helping her identity as ‘Jane’. Because new, she feels adapted, in fact becomes the typical American she always wanted to be. Jase becomes Jane of Bud Ripple Meyer. She never remains bound by any one. That is also **gracefully** discusses the continuation of their past, present and futures.

Living in the United States where immigrants feel often ashamed of their differences from others, Gogol also suffers from the unique difference of his name. During adolescence, he desires to blend in but lives unnoticed as Americans never view him as an American. Being away from home at college makes it easy for Gogol to reject completely his identity as Gogol and become Nikhil. But at times, he feels as if he’s cast himself in a play, acting the part of twins, distinguishable to the naked eye and yet fundamentally different. He dreads his visits home where he is known as Gogol.

To him his name ‘Gogol’ signifies all his discomforts to fit into two different cultures. Moreover, it is the name after his father’s favorite author and not his. And, Gogol is not the first name of the writer. So, Gogol Ganguli not only has a pet name turned into the good name, but a last name turned into the first name. He knows none in the world, in Russia or India or America or anywhere, who shares his name, not even the source of his namesake:

 *He hates having to tell people that it doesn’t mean anything ‘in India’. He*

*hates having to wear a nametag on his sweater at Model United Nations Day at*

*school. He even hates signing his name at the bottom of his drawings in art class.*

*He hates that his name is both absurd and obscure, that it has nothing to do with*

*who he is, that it is neither Indian nor American but of all things Russian.*

 *(Lahiri 76)*

As much as possible Gogol detaches himself for many years from his roots and his family. Gogol goes away from his family to Yale with a changed name and that sets up the barriers between Gogol and his family. The distance between Gogol and his parents continues to increase.

NAME GAME

This no distrust that the modern Jyoti is to Jasmine, Jazzy, Jase and Jane. That is explaining every name. In this method Jasmine is surrounded between the two cultures of the east and west, past and present, old and new. She is always awake in search of a material identity. She compares American life and Indian life. (Eg) she meets her husband teacher Mr. Devinder Vadhera. He is about a forty year’s old man. But setting and having painted his hair. He got married about one year before but Indian village girl of nineteen, Jasmine study’s her difficulty and says;

*Nirmala was nineteen: according to my forged passport. I was nineteen too. But I was a widow she was in the game. I was permanently on the sidelines (143)*

Gogol wants to be an American and not a Bengali. As attempts to do so, he starts smoking secretly from time to time when he and his friends get together to listen to records at one another’s homes. He becomes bold enough to kiss a girl in a party. He goes home less frequently, dates the American girls and turns angry when anyone calls him Gogol. During his college years, he continues to smoke cigarettes and marijuana and to go to many parties. When once he participates in a party at Ezra Stiles with a fake ID, he loses his virginity to a girl he cannot remember. For the first time, he introduces himself as Nikhil, a newly achieved identity, to a girl wearing a plaid woolen skirt and combat boots and mustard tights.

*The Namesake* portrays the constant struggle of the first generation immigrants and their children to find their place in the society. According to Dubey:

 *The immigrant experience is complicated as a sensitive immigrant finds*

*himself or herself perpetually at a transit station fraught with memories of the*

*original home which are struggling with the realities of the new world.(Dudey 22)*

The first generation immigrants struggle when they adapt to a different culture and their children struggle while trying to respect their roots and adapting to the American society. Due to this difference, perhaps, they go far away from each other:

 *He didn’t want to go home on the weekends, to go with them to pujas and*

*Bengali parties, to remain unquestionably in their world. (Lahiri 126)*

Once, Gogol surprises his mother by calling the New Haven as a home. His three month’s stay there gives him the feeling of being at home. On the other hand, in spite of Ashima’s twenty years in America, she cannot bring herself to refer to Pemberton Road, her home. Frustrated with America, much later in their lives, the second generation immigrants truly begin to value their Bengali heritage.

AMERICAN MARRIAGE

Gogol is deeply attached with his white American college sweetheart Ruth. Though he sleeps with her, he cannot imagine her in his kitchen in the place of his mother. He never dares to tell his parents about her. His parents always point out the examples of Bengali men who marry the Americans and the marriages end in divorce. But, Gogol pities for his parents when they speak to him in this way and for having no experience of being young and in love. This brings out the generation gap between the immigrant parents and their children. Later, when Gogol and Ruth separate for the spring and summer vacations, the first time his longing for Ruth makes him realize the longing of his parents for the people they loved in India.

At a panel discussion about the Indian novels written in English, Gogol comes to know about the adjectives used for the immigrants like him in America. The Americans call immigrants ‘ABCD’, which stands for ‘American-Born Confused Deshi’. He also learns that the ‘C’ could stand for ‘conflicted’ and ‘deshi’ for ‘countrymen’ means ‘Indians’. He feels that the term is quite appropriate for him because during the trip to India his and Sonia’s American English accent always creates the confusion for their aunts and uncles. Moreover, his living with a pet name and a good name in America, where such distinction does not exist, surely is emblematic of the greatest confusion of all. In America, he avoids any ABCD friends because they remind him too much of the way his parents choose to live befriending the people only for the past they happen to share.

During his job in the New York City, Gogol becomes rather stiff and perpetually angry personality. He meets a very attractive and rather socially aggressive American girl named Maxine. She belongs to a very wealthy American family. Completely immersed in the love of Maxine, Gogol becomes a member of her family and helps them in the cooking and shopping. When Gogol introduces Maxine to his parents, Ashima dismisses Maxine as something that Gogol will eventually get over. Gogol envisions his mother’s feelings and reactions to the emotions and events he encounters. Gogol observes the difference between his mother and the American parents of Maxine at a dinner party:

 *His own mother would never have served so few dishes to a guest. She*

*would have kept her eyes trained on Maxine, insisting she have seconds and then*

*thirds. The table would have been lined with a row of serving bowls so that people*

*could help themselves. But Lydia pays no attention to Gogol’s plate. She makes*

*no announcement indicating that there is more. (Lahiri 133)*

Gogol compares the maternity and hospitality, especially of his American girl friend Maxine’s mother Lydia, with his own mother and concludes that the maternity is cultural. In observing Lydia, Gogol is struck by her difference from Ashima. Lydia entertains effortlessly, spends money lavishly and is very comfortable to acknowledge not only her daughter’s relationships but also her sex life. Gogol realizes the fate of his relationship with Maxine as a piece of cultural eccentricity. He loves Maxine for her American house and her parents’ American manner of living:

 *He loves the mess that surrounded Maxine, her hundreds of things always*

*covering her floor and her bedside table, her habit, when they are alone on the*

*fifth floor, of not shutting the door when she goes to the bathroom. Her unkempt*

*ways, a challenge to his increasingly minimalist taste, charm him. He learns to*

*love the food she and her parents eat, the polenta and risotto, the bouillabaisse*

*and so-sobuck, the meat baked in parchment paper. (Lahiri 137)*

ALIENATION

Gogol realizes a total alienation from his Bengali roots when Lydia, Maxine and Gerald joke about mistaking his cultural and ethnic heritage as Italian. They are entirely unknown to his cultural values and background which are so central to his identity. Gogol realizes that he cannot deny his connection to his mother’s culture, her maternity, his proximity to his mother’s essentialism and his own need for the American-Bengali hybridity. In effect, he becomes an object of the comparison through which Lydia and her friends are allowed to better express their American’s. Gogol tires to entirely mask his Bengali identity. Gogol’s realization results in immersing himself into an entirely Bengali-American relationship with his then-wife Moushumi.

Ashima is left all alone at house when Ashoke goes for the research project in Ohio and her children study somewhere in the other towns. She misses her husband and children so much. Once again alone at home, Ashima remembers her parents’ greeting cards send to her from India over last twenty-seven years. Whenever she is alone at home, she reads nostalgically all letters of her parents:

 *She has saved her dead parents’ letters on the top shelf of her closet, in a*

*large white purse she used to carry in the seventies until the strap broke. Once a*

*year she dumps the letters onto her bed and goes through them, devoting an entire*

*day to her parents’ words, allowing her a good cry. She revisits their affection*

*and concern, conveyed weekly. Faithfully, across continents – all the bit of news*

*that had had nothing to do with her life in Cambridge but which had sustained*

*her in those days nevertheless. (Lahiri 160-161)*

CROSS CULTURAL

Ashima develops the cross-cultural sisterhood with the American co-workers at the library, where an American librarian offers her a job. She works at the library to pass the time. She makes her first American friends of women at work who are also living alone like her because they are divorced. It truly manifests Ashima’s cultural growth and represents her exploration into the American culture that is alike and yet different to her own. Lahiri shows Ashima’s similarities and differences to her American co-workers. They too are isolated, but their reasons differ, and because of her culture Ashima would never be alone despite divorce.

Ashoke dies of a massive heart attack and shortly changes everything to Ashima, Sonia and Gogol. At this time, Gogol realizes the cultural importance of the death rituals. Ashima throws away and sends back all the greeting cards for the Christmas. Her friends suggest her to go to India to see her brother and cousins, but she refuses to escape to Calcutta:

 *She refuses to be so far from the place where her husband made his life, the country in which he died. ‘Now I know why he went to Cleveland,’ she tells*

*people, refusing, even in death, to utter her husband’s name. ‘He was teaching me*

*how to live alone’. (Lahiri 183)*

Gogol slowly withdraws from Maxine as he tries to sort out his emotions. Maxine admits that she feels jealous of his mother and sister. This accusation strikes Gogol so hard that he has no energy to argue anymore. Gogol breaks off the relationship and begins to spend more time with his mother and sister. Maxine later gets engaged to another man. Sonali lives with Ashima occupying her childhood room once again. She leaves the house early in the morning to take a bus and then a train to downtown Boston. Both of them observe their totally changed mother:

 *Their mother has become thinner, her hair gray. The white column of her*

*part, the sight of her bare wrists, pains Gogol when he first catches sight of her.*

*From Sonia he learns of how their mother spends her evenings, alone in her bed,*

*unable to sleep, watching television without sound. (Lahiri 189)*

Ashima changes to the extent that she is ready to accept Maxine as her daughter-in-law. She asks Gogol to patch-up the things with Maxine. She is ready to make all the adjustments for the sake of her dear son’s happiness. But, Gogol denies any possibility of Maxine in his life. After the breakup with Maxine, Ashima suggests Gogol to meet Moushumi-a daughter of her Bengali friend, the unfortunate as her intended American groom changed his mind at the last minute. Though reluctant to meet Moushumi, Gogol meets her anyway to please his mother. Moushumi Mazoomdar is his childhood friend who shares the same culture and background. They have celebrated the Christmas together in each other’s houses.

This focuses on the oneness that the immigrants share in America. Their common raising brings them together and they feel attracted towards each other and eventually get married. Gogol and Moushumi’s relationship is an example of the cultural identity construction. They are the Bengali-Americans who rely too much on the typical Bengali identity stereotypes such as over-education, preoccupation with the parental influence and the city and suburb living and the seeking to carve out their own identity. Their wedding is not what they wanted. They would have preferred a sort of venues their friends choose, but it is selected by their parents. After marriage Moushumi’s dissertation completion remains an excuse for her not being a mother.

However, tied down by the marriage Moushumi becomes restless and begins to regret for what she has done. Gogol often feels like a poor substitute for Moushumi's American ex-fiancé Graham. The predicament of Moushumi focuses on the failure and frustration in attempts to get united with the Americans. Graham’s refusal at the last stage indicates the impossibility of union between Indian and American:

 *She was supposed to have been married a year ago, a wedding that he and his mother had Sonia had been invited to, but her fiancé, an American, had*

*backed out of the engagement, well after the hotel had been booked, the*

*invitations sent, the gift registry selected. (Lahiri 192)*

Similar to Gogol, Moushumi also shares the habits like smoking cigarette, drinking wine and working as an independent in the city. She hates her parents’ moving to America from London. She hates America for its vastness and less likeness with India. At her twelve, she makes a pact with two other Bengali girls that she will never marry a Bengali man. They write a statement vowing never to do so. They spit on it at a time and bury it somewhere in the parents’ backyard. She also hates the Indian way of marriages. During her college days her American dreams are not fulfilled and when she goes to Paris, she begins to fall effortlessly into the affairs. The line below focus on her life in Paris:

 *With no hesitation, she had allowed men to seduce her in cafes, in parks,*

*while she gazed at paintings in museums. She gave herself openly, completely, not*

*caring about the consequences. . . . Some of them had been married, far older,*

*fathers to children in secondary school. The men had been French for the most*

*part, but also German, Persian, Italian and Lebanese. There were days she slept*

*with one man after lunch, another after dinner. They were a bit excessive, she*

*tells Gogol with a roll of her eyes, the type to lavish her with perfume and jewels. (Lahiri 215)*

The relationship between Gogol and Moushumi seems to be an adjustment, not love, imposed upon them by their parents and the situation. Their parents are friends. Their contact is artificial and imposed. This is something like their relationship with the cousins in India and it lacks even the justification of the blood ties. Their visit to Paris renews Moushumi’s happy, liberal and full-of-joys past life she enjoyed once. It becomes an urgency of her life to regain the same happiness again. In a party attended with Moushumi at her friends’ house, Gogol realizes the reality of American cultural hypocrisy:

 *They are an intelligent, attractive, well-dressed crowd. Also a bit*

*incestuous. The vast majority of them knew each other from Brown, and Gogol*

*can’t even shake the feeling that half the people in the room have slept with one*

*another. (Lahiri 236)*

 The difference between Bengali and American leads towards the impossibility to mesh them together. Though frequently with them in the parties, Gogol realizes how mismatched the American couples are:

 *And yet as much as Moushumi enjoys seeing Astrid and Donald, Gogol has recently began to notice that she is gloomy in the aftermath, as if seeing them*

*serves only to remind her that their own lives will never match up. (Lahiri 238)*

Moushumi receives a letter of approval for the research grants. Had she got it before her marriage, she would have accepted to go to France. But now she has the husband and marriage to consider. Then, she contacts a man named Dimitri-the same person who was the first to attract her sexuality and they begin an affair. After her adulterous act, Moushumi on one hand feels guilty and on the other she feels at peace. This is very complicated feeling that justifies her adultery, as if something like this is expected and the most necessary:

 *She wonders if she is the only woman in her family ever to have betrayed*

*her husband, to have been unfaithful. This is what upsets her most to admit: that*

*the affair causes her to feel strangely at peace, the complication of it calming her,*

*structuring her day. (Lahiri 266)*

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

When Gogol finds it out, they get divorced. By breaking the marriage of Gogol and Moushumi, Lahiri implies that the hybrid Bengali-American identity itself contains the kind of essentialism for the purer types of identities by which the Bengali and Caucasian-American identities are sometimes typified. Ashima feels guilty for causing Gogol to meet Moushumi and considers this as an American cultural influence which causes a severe damage to the Indian ethical and moral values:

 *How could she have known/ but unfortunately they have not considered it*

*their duty to stay married, as the Bengalis of Ashoke and Ashima’s generation do.*

*They are not willing to accept, to adjust, to settle for something less than their*

*ideal of happiness. That pressure has given way, in case of subsequent*

*generation, to American common sense. (Lahiri 276)*

Ashima changes totally by learning to do the things on her own. Though today she wears sari and still puts her long hair in a bun, it is not like she was in the Calcutta. Now, she decides to return to Indian with an American passport. Her daughter Sonia remains with her for the moral duty after her father’s death. When Sonia marries, Ashima makes plans to travel and live with different portions of her family at different times during each year. But there are several other important observations to be made on this encounter. In America she misses India and when in India she will miss America.

At the end, Ashima sells the family home to live in India with her siblings for half of the year. Ashima begins a new chapter of her life, in which she plans to travel, split her remaining years between the Calcutta and America. As she sells her house, which is no longer necessary in her retirement, she hosts a final Bengali-American party to mark the end of her days in the home she shared with her husband, son and daughter on Pemberton Road. In the party, Ashima is honored by the guests for her communal maternity and they will Miss Ashima’s encouraged cultural learning:

 *People talk of how much they’ve come to love Ashima’s Christmas Eve*

*parties, that they’ve missed them these past few years, that it won’t be the same*

*without her. They have come to rely on her, Gogol realizes, to collect them*

*together, to organize the holiday, to convert it, to introduce the tradition to those*

*who are new. (Lahiri 286)*

Her daughter Sonia prepares to marry a Chinese-American man named Ben. This is most notable in Ashima’s pride, after Gogol’s failed marriage to the Bengali-American Moushumi that her daughter Sonia is marrying for the love to a Chinese - American rather than for the mutual cultural similarity or because of the cultural tradition:

 *Something tells her Sonia will be happy with this boy—quickly she corrects herself—this young man. He has brought happiness to her daughter, in a way Moushumi had never brought it to her son. (Lahiri 276)*

CONCLUSION

Gogol finally learns that the solution is not to abandon fully or attempt to diminish either of the cultures, but to mesh the two together. Gogol is not fully in tune with his identity until he realizes that he is made up of the both, and instead of weakening, his pride is strengthened. He feels proud of his identity and the meaning of his name and his roots. Gogol accepts his name and picks up a collection of the stories by the Russian author that his father has gifted as a birthday present many years ago. The novel describes the struggles and hardships of the Bengali-Indians who immigrate to the United States. To conclude one may agree with Indira Nityanandam who critically observes:

*This novel explores the process of cultural mingling with Ashima being the least inclined to lose her Indian identity and be swamped by the new culture. The novel is the expatriate’s voice attempting to make meaning out of the web in which she finds herself. ` (Nityanandam 15)*

She has also lived with Taylor, Wyllie and duff and other Americans as a caregiver. She create that Duff is not their own child. The child of Taylor and Wyllie. Agreement is foreign to her as the idea of widow remarriage. But Indian culture widow was no married.

The end of the novel is the positive acceptance of the protagonist after facing worst form boldly. Finally she has familiar herself in alien world. Its plan is fairly emotional. And this novel is another example of the stream of consciousness novels that every small thought can emerge. At any time when the character gets to compare the past events with the present time of being specially located in India and America.

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