

# Exile Literature: Identity formation of Diaspora



Mashira Khan Pritoma

Student ID: 10103020

Department of English and Humanities

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Mashira Khan Pritoma  
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**THE PROS AND CONS OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE CHARACTERS**

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# Abstract

In admiration of the major issue as to how the Diaspora personality of Asian community faces identity formation and development, I wish to put my thesis as continues research process where I discussed few notable writers of the Asian origin who has refined the psychological development of Diaspora identity. Through reading of their notable works, I have noticed the question of identity formation and development has gone through many steps of reformation to come to the present state.

Diaspora brings to mind various assumption and images. It can be the positive site of achieving an individual identity, or, a negative site of fear and anxiety of losing one's identity. Diaspora gets affected by various aspect of modern life such as: culture, space, time, language, histories, people and place. What makes Diaspora different than the other forms of travel, is its massive impact on the travelers, this kind of travelers are popularly known as migrants. Migrant people depend on the 'others' land but they form new communities that are a mixture of their tradition and the newly acquainted foreign culture. This formation leaves the migrant people into a dependent Limbo state and the only way they could be free from dependency is through self-realization. My work in this thesis is explaining and discussing the identity crisis of these migrant characters and how they start from a dependent Limbo situation, finally achieving the ultimate independence, free from any kind of mental or social boundaries.

## Introduction:

### Diaspora exile and identity development

*“And if you lived in a place you had to  
 speak a foreign tongue,  
 your mother tongue would rot,  
 rot and die in your mouth  
 until you had to spit it out.  
 I thought I spit it out  
 but overnight while I dream,  
 it grows back, a stump of a shoot  
 grows longer, grows moist, grows strong veins,  
 it ties the other tongue in knots,  
 the bud opens, the bud opens in my mouth,  
 it pushes the other tongue aside.  
 every time I think I've forgotten,  
 I think I've lost the mother tongue,  
 it blossoms out of my mouth”*

The above extract from the poem, *Search for My Tongue* by the Indian American writer, Sujata Bhatt gives us large example of different experiences of an exile in ‘other’ land. In the writer's case, the background was more autobiographical than a theory as she is a product of migrant herself; Bhatt is a Gujaratee Indian studying in America. Her poem introduces presumption of what goes through in all our minds whenever our independence, be it physical

or moral, comes into a limbo situation. An emigrant that goes through the process of leaving mother land eventually succeeds to adjust in the foreign land but always longs for homeland. Finding one's own identity in an exiled place is difficult; the dilemma that emigrant faces in adopting the new culture makes them insecure and vulnerable. In contemporary modern time a new kind of genre has formed that discusses explores the emigrant term; it is called 'Diaspora'. According to Steven Vertovec there are three meaning of Diaspora. They are 'Diaspora as a social form', 'Diaspora as a type of consciousness' and finally 'Diaspora as a mode of cultural production' and these forms are the fundamental structure of the general understanding of Diaspora. In the paper he argues that the people facing emigration and exile mainly faces the Diaspora of consciousness as they mostly go through massive conscious change with the change of their surroundings.

The term 'Diaspora' traces back to the ancient Greek word for dispersion (OED), was originally conceived to refer to the scattered populations of Jews that were forced into exile from their homeland. In the new world of mass immigration, the word means less of eternal banishment, but mostly for the migrant people who leave their homeland and culture to settle in foreign land . Diaspora people are the person who voluntarily agrees to move from their homeland to somewhere, the movement of one region to another is tracked back to the colonial time. The colonizers had to move to different part to win wars and by doing this they introduced the process 'migration' that allows people to shift their home. Migration was there from the early age of civilization, this was the way to distribute the power and civilization among the world as the powerful would conquer and takeover the other less dominant culture. Early migration consisted of people who would wonder places in search for food and natural sources. The domination of the colonialism led the European population to travel to different



places like a modern day emigrant. In modern time, after colonialism, migration and changing ones root didn't only happened in case of colonized countries, the most recent and most socially significant Diasporas movements have been those of colonized peoples back to the metropolitan centers, to replace the manpower lost by the colonial time. In countries such as Britain and America, the population now has substantial minorities of diasporic ex-colonial peoples. In recent times, the notion of a 'diasporic identity' has been adopted by many writers as a positive affirmation of their hybridity<sup>1</sup>. This new concept 'Hybridity' gave birth to the notion of finding one own place in the foreign land, the Limbo situation made the literary writers describe their characters through a series of identity development.

So to the readers, Diaspora brings to mind various contested ideas and images. It can be a positive site to build up an identity, or, a negative site of fears of losing that identity. Diaspora deals with multiple mixtures of cultures, languages, histories, people, places, and times. It does not only mean that people are dispersed in different places but that they congregate in other places, forming new communities. In such gatherings, new form of culture and conciseness is formed to add to the remaining culture. New imagined communities arise which do not simply substitute old ones but form a fusion liberty that gives birth to a new community that involves the hybrid society, or, in modern terms, known as Diaspora society.

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<sup>1</sup> That critique of cultural imperialist hybridity meant that the rhetoric of hybridity progressed to challenging essentialism, and is applied to sociological theories of identity, multiculturalism, and racism. Moreover, polyphony is another important element of hybridity theory, also comprehends the cultural politics of the condition of being "a migrant" in the contemporary metropolis. Yet, hybridity no longer is solely associated with migrant populations and with border towns; it also applies contextually to the flow of cultures and their interactions.

"The term 'Diaspora' was only brought into the current cultural debate after the notion of multiculturalism had been fully established and had begun to be an important field within the cultural studies. Multiculturalism refers to the recognition of the co-existence of differing cultures within one nation" (Reichardt, 289). He explains the reason why the term starts becoming popular; in his article he explains that the multiculturalism is the birth places of Diaspora, the Limbo position of cultures in an emigrants mind create a necessity to form a new culture. The cultural mixture has a big role to play in shaping identities and mind frame, the vast verities of religion and norms makes the emigrant question about their own value. The answer is given in the difficulties of finding their own root thus resulting being lost in the 'others' culture and identity; this identity crisis and the lack of communication forces people to look for their home within new surroundings.

This paper will aim to explain the physiological and identical development of the emigrant characters in adjusting with a new land, explaining the journey from a dependent to a totally independent individual. It will also argue that the emigrant characters are firstly relying on their experience of the past to go into a transformation phase where they change their outlook about life; understand the dependency and finally developed into an independent individual identity. This idea is discussed in Stevens' essay as one of the acts; it is called 'Diaspora of consciousness' the idea of duality and the process of adjusting to the multi Hybrid culture is discussed as discrimination towards the already existed culture "Its particularity is variously described as being marked by a dual or paradoxical nature, It is constituted negatively by experiences of discrimination and exclusion, and positively by identification with an historical heritage (such as 'Indian civilization') or contemporary world cultural or political forces (such

as 'Islam')” (pg, 10). According to the essay creates certain confusion among the emigrant that is trapped in the duality. This paper will talk about the trapped situation and how the characters break free from the cage of duality and cultural confusion to gain individuality and independence.

Under the general idea of identity development this paper will also shed light on the following topics: the experiences of displacement and homelessness, the idea of 'home' and nation, the delusion of mixed nationality of Diaspora, identity questions (belonging, depending, transforming, stepping away from familiar area, independence), and issues relating to generation of emigrant, the difference between loss of identity among the generation, the religious participation in defining the diaspora characters identity. Describing emigrant identity requires the characters to be in a nation that gives them the multicultural environment, this environment helps the characters develop their own individuality such countries in modern times are Britain and America. So, I choose this two as a setting for this paper, and I will draw on the writings of Monica Ali, Jhumpa Lahiri, and the theories of Edward Said, Hegel and Salman Rushdie to help me explain my point; that the identity crisis in Diaspora individual can be developed by gaining independence in identity .

Monica Ali's *Brick lane* is a novel that has the elements of a true diasporic character, a group of people who go through the complex situation of adopting in a multicultural society. Characters in the novel goes through different form of identical deformity through their emigrant experiences, most of the characters in the beginning can be found dependent on their memories from the past land to get over the isolation and loneliness. But yet there are few extraordinary that form their own identity and gain independence, for example, Nazneen and

Karim. In this paper, characters like Nazneen, Karim and Chanu (husband of Nazneen) are highlighted as they show the success, confusion and the failure side of the Diaspora society. Nazneen, a young girl surviving in the foreign land in her own way and developing into an individual and strong personality, Karim, a second generation, emigrant who fails to recognize his heritage thinks finally he is close to his heritage by defining his life through religion and Chanu a emigrant failure who is always haunted by the past life and homeland became the example of the emigrant Bangladeshis in England through the book. The extended discussion of their physiological development in identity and personal growth will help to show the difficulties and the boundaries an emigrant has to face.

Jumpa Lahiris' *Interpreters of Maladies* has adopted a new way of presenting emigrant stories into literary words, in the form of short stories Lahiri introduces different issues that affect the emigrant under various character outlines; these stories are based on the struggle and achievement of the migrant characters. All the stories are related to India and the characters are either Indian's living in India or Indian's living in America. The stories that this paper will discuss are the story of the first generation immigrants who faced the harsh reality of fitting in a society that is truly new in culture and in geographical location. 'Mrs Sen', 'When Mr Pirzada Came to Dinner' and 'Interpreters of Maladies' are the stories that discuss the emigrant as a delusional person longing for connection and explains the innocence and simple truth through the second generations narration. Finally in 'The Third and Final Continent', the success of hard work and coping with the new culture are introduced as achievements. Thus by these stories, Lahiri introduces the new Diasporas who accept the changes in their Indian culture and moves forward with it. For this paper, I will pick out the stories from the collection

that speaks more of the Indian forward thinking Diasporas, their life and the struggle they go through.

The two novels deals with themes like migration, multiculturalism, religion, cultural aspects, economic inequality, fundamentalism and terrorist violence. These issues are not new, and they are more relevant than ever in the dynamic picture of the world today. This identification of the migrant's identity should therefore be of interest to others as well. Migration has been a major theme throughout history. The reasons for migration are varied, but climatic, social, religious, cultural and financial factors have been important. In general, the common aim of migration has been to improve one's future prospects through education and work. The issues of identity dependency, transformation and independence, are important factors in this connection. After decolonization, many people from the Third World and former colonized countries migrated to the West in order to secure a better future for themselves and their families back home. From the industrialized countries' point of view, the immigrants have helped out in an increasing demand for labour. However, the multicultural societies of today have also been a challenge. Due to variation in cultural and religious background, finding identity has proven difficult in relation to any one culture or one modern world ideas. Finally, the question of finding ones 'true heritage' has been of significance – both in respect of the emigrant and their later generation as this findings make them create a better future. To find the heritage they had to face their self-consciousness as this helps them to realize their dependency and face the reality. For a migrant to find their true independence he/ she has to face the dependent side of their personality, only by improving and transforming their personality they can achieve true 'independence' .

## Chapter one:

### Dependent on home and beyond

The main character such as Nazneen, Chanu, Karim, Laila, Mrs. Sen, Mr. Pirzada, the narrator in ‘The Third and The Final Continent’ in these novels at the beginning goes through a phase of dependency as they depend on their native land and the connection of home to define them. Edward Said talks about the concept of exile as a chapter of migrant people where the achievement out of the chapter is the feeling of lost and leaving one’s native place behind, “Exile is strangely compelling to think about possible to experience. It is the unreliable rift forced between being and a native place, between the self and its true home: sadness can never be surmounted” (Said, pg 173). This sadness and emotion makes the characters venerable on the idea of their roots and heritage. The romantic notion of exile is seen as a heroic tale where the characters are praised and being portrayed as glamorous people who survive the new land but according to Said this romantic and imperial idea neglects; the true fear of a literary exile character the fear of “the achievement of exile is evidently undermined by the loss of something left behind” (page, 173), thus making them cripple in self consciousness and depended on the feeling of Home. This chapter will discuss the fear of being alienated and isolated that Said talks about, the concept of stepping in an outside world with the feeling of lost and depression.

### *Brick lane* by Monica Ali

“Exiles, emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urges to reclaim to look back at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt.” (Salman Rushdie: 1983: 75)

As Salman Rushdie said that the person who goes through exile and emigration faces certain amount of unfastened in their personality that creates the urge of hanging on to the few pieces of roots that they have in the new land. This kind of urges is the reason why a lot of characters in the book depend on their native customs to remain in touch with the country they left behind. The longing for homeland makes them dependent on the dream of going back, only in few cases a migrant will go through transformation and finally emerges as an independent personality who can adapt to the existing foreign society. Like the quote by Rushdie the main Diaspora characters Nazneen, Chanu, Hasina, Karim and Dr. Azad in *Brick lane* faced the harsh reality of exile, migration and lastly the mutation among the two cultures. These experiences make the characters realize their true identity as an independent person from the failure and success they had. In this chapter my paper will discuss the characters of London through their journey of identity, my paper will also discuss the reason behind the journey, and how the character starts from being depended on the culture of their native home and transform into an independent person with the capability to understand the reality of their mixed up culture ideology and culture.

Nazneen's Dependency on Fate and culture:

Nazneen, from the beginning of her life, is depended on fate like her mother Rupban. Rupban was a lady from a holy family background and as a family heirloom she passed onto some taboo of 'fate controlling life' to her daughter Nazneen. Her growing up was documented by these words,

"As Nazneen grew she heard many times this story of How You Were Left to Your Fate.

It was because of her mother's wise decision that Nazneen lived to become the wide-

faced, watchful girl that she was. Fighting against one's Fate can weaken the blood.”(Ali pg, 9)

The lines represented the taboo believes that Nazneen’ s mother left her; this kind of taboo made her depended on her fate. Her life in Bangladesh is the life of an obedient girl who carries the notion in her mind that her mother is from a family of saint and she was expected to follow certain rules that would govern her earlier life. Nazneen stayed loyal with her fathers’ every decision as she would marry the guy her father chooses for her. She believed in one mantra, “What could not be changed must be borne” (page, 9) and this played a big role in her getting married at an early age to a man in London. The lines that describes the first time Nazneen saw her future husbands photograph is important as it shows how much she was depended in her father and Fate, she married Chanu because of her father’s approval she did not raise a question against it is a quality that she gained later in her life,

“as she turned to go she noticed, without meaning to, where her father put the photograph. She just happened to see it. These things happen. She carried the image around in her mind as she walked beneath the banyans with her cousins.”(Ali, pg 10).

The quote is significant as it can be the first sign of rebellious that triggers her first step in finding independence. Her accidently looking at the picture and thinking about Chanu gives the reader an idea of her rebellious nature. As the later part of the book explains her migration from the place she called home, she moved from her home to her husband’s place at England, where she became dependent on her husband to show her ways. Her life in London, her identity crisis struggle to survive in a foreign land is the main topic for this chapter.



Nazneen from the beginning of her journey in settling into a new place faces difficulties relating to a complete different environment, being only able to speak two words in English 'I am sorry' and 'Thank you' she faces the biggest barrier that is language . Her husband Chanu talks about different English poet and their works to her that leaves her clueless, communication gap between the couple leaves her confused as Chanu would talk about the importance of learning English but will not let her learn the language. As a result this makes her depended on Chanu to explain how everything works at the new place, Nazneen is blinded by her husband from the start as he acts to be modern but remains conservative until the end, Nazneen would stay ignorant about the English culture through the first few chapters in the novel until she meets Karim,

“Why should you go out? ‘If you go out, ten people will say, “I saw her walking on the street. And I will look a fool. Personally, I don’t mind if you go out but these people are so ignorant. What can you do?”(Ali, Pg 45).

This shows how the Bengali culture and norms would dictate the life of the characters even after leaving Bangladesh they carry the tradition that makes them move backwards in this fast forward moving time, the fact that Nazneen was denied the chance to study English language made her progress in identity development late. According to Said “Nationalism”<sup>2</sup> , in the people who lives in exile, is important as this is the only way they stay connected with their homeland thus forcing the migrant to be depended on the taboo norms in their culture through it hampers the progress of their modern life.

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<sup>2</sup> Reflection on Exile by Edward Said.

Nazneen is amazed by the new things she sees in London, she gets puzzled why the women in England would want to slim down when they are healthy and the 'slimming dog' notion where the women slim their dogs for fashion this is different to her as in Bangladesh being slim is a sign of poverty. Things that happen around her makes her own identity to be question she wonders is her traditional culture is good for her or English is the modern culture to follow. Nazneen because of the liberal freedom in different norms of English culture starts to like it; she compares notes that make the cultures different. She admires the British people's idea of self reliance and liberal freedom as they intent to mind their own business rather than commenting on others. Such a freedom is missing in the Bengali culture, the women in the Bengali society share their personal and family life to each other; the unity makes them feel close to home. Nazneen being the rebellious she is, feels that this openness hampers ones' personal space like when Nazneen's first child Raqib was born Mrs. Islam a fellow housewife tries to manipulate her in how to raise him. This is when she really started to respect privacy and the individual space in life.

Within the Bangladeshi community, the concept of privacy is missing as the women help each other out but when someone tries to get out of the circle and live freely by wearing English cloths, working with the men, learning English, they spread false rumor of family problems and isolate them from the group. For example in the novel, what the women did with Razia, they would isolate her because she started to wear English clothes and learn English. Her progress in finding her identity made Nazneen inspire to do something with life.

Mixing with different community and learning another culture is the way of fitting in the modern world but according to the traditional Bengali women in the book it is considered a

taboo. They think if the women learn the other norms of many culture their own tradition will suffer as according to the native society women carries the tradition forward; Nazneen is isolated from sharing her life or her problems as she knows the deeds she did is against the traditional native culture, the frustration of not sharing her life makes her confused about what is right. 'A few times she had imagined conversations with Razia. She played them out, reading both parts, trying a new phrase here and there. [...] They did not speak of him. It was not possible' (Ali, 393). To have a separate life except the life of a Bengali woman was not acceptable by anyone, even to Razia who is considered modernized by her activity. Nazneen fear of culture and her limitation as obedient Bengali women made her realization of self consciousness difficult, as we will discuss later how it actually helped her discover her identity. She goes through series of situation through transformation to finally go into a state of self discovery and achieve her independence.

#### Chanu's Dependency on missed dreams:

Chanu is a character who faces difficulties with his identity as a working class immigrant citizen in England; his dream of the 'Ideal Chanu' who will get everything he wants in life is the only dependency he has and this false dream lead to his destruction. Chanu is very passionate about English poetry and needs approval from another character to prove his point. His character is of somebody who is delusional and has difficulties understanding his potentials; he lives in the mindset of the native land he scolds and complains about his life. Chanu has to change his job constantly, (due to low payment) as his situation in job market is so terrible that after working for sixteen years in London city he can only afford a cheap flat at Tower Hamlet and for his children Sahana and Bibi a community school. According to

Bruce a famous book reviewer at literature magazine; Chanu is the failiure who fails to understand the reality, this works as a positive factor for Nazneen to gain her identity,

“He is foolish, vain, quits his job in anger, and takes self-improvement courses and makes plans without finishing them. He claims his failures are the result of British racism, and he wants to return to Bangladesh, which has become a paradise in his mind.”

( pg, 1).

His dream of being successful never fulfills and he fails to gather even the amount to go back home, his identity of a man in the foreign land is lost as he fails to understand the reality of his immigrant shortcomings. In his own words he discovers his failure and feels hopeful for the time yet to come, he feels the world will soon understand his worth and give him the credit that he deserves. Chanu has the false idea that if any person is educated in English he can have anything he wants, his perception changes and he finally realizes the reality. He struggles to understand the life of a migrant and finally after leaving the life of a migrant for several years he gets defeated by the reality.

Karims dependency on Nationalism:

Said says ‘Exile and Nationalism’ goes hand in hand, for an exile person who is alienated from motherland attempts to be the most patriotic, they look back to their heritage and culture by staying in a group or forming one, “more common is the pressure on the exile to join-parties, national movements, the state”(said, 183). Looking at this, the only character that comes into acknowledgement is *Brick Lane’s* Karim he is the only character in the novel who found his identity in the culture he was not born into. Through Karim is described as the

young promising man who finds his own way but still the symbol of his identity crisis is the ‘stammering’. Nazneen notices that Karim stammers only when he speaks in Bangla not in English, this works as a notification of Karim's identity confusion. His identity background is much more complex than Nazneen or Chanu; he is a British born Bengali who works with the migrant Bengalis thus making his identity go through a Limbo stage. Due to his boundaries as a second generation migrant Karim is confused about his actual identity as a result he suffers from ‘stammering’ and seeks approval for his decision. He depends on the group and his beard to be recognized as Muslim Bangladeshi, such bindings change his character completely at the end.

*Interpreter of maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri

Lahiri's Indian heritage forms the basis for her short stories; stories in which she deals with questions of identity, alienation and the plight of those who are culturally displaced. She vividly shows the estrangement and isolation that often afflict first- and even second-generation immigrants. Although the immigrant experience is central to her work, it is not her exclusive concern: through her characters, she suggests, that there are phases of identity crisis that affects the human mind thoroughly. Her character depends on certain things that make their isolation and alienation more permanent and effective. This chapter will discuss the dependence of certain characters from the book.

‘When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dinner’ is a story of two cultures addressing under one roof, the story is told by a ten year old girl named Laila, who is an Indian American. By choosing a young girl to do the narrative Lahiri explores the understanding of a child about the issues of the cultural difference and isolation through Laila. Laila is also the main

character that goes through major identity change as in terms of understanding Mr. Pirzada she understands her heritage. Laila's curiosity and childish approach to understand the mysterious diner Mr. Pirzada who came to their house opens her cultural dependency, she realizes how ignorant she is about her homeland. This realization of understanding her heritage happens over various occasions like, when Laila made the dining table for four her father asked who the fourth glass is for; she replied to her father, "A glass for the Indian man" (Page 24). The parents' reaction to that was "Mr. Pirzada won't be coming today. More importantly, Mr. Pirzada is no longer considered Indian." (page 25) by saying this her parents opened up the biggest question in her mind, why Mr. Pirzada was not considered an Indian anymore, It did not make sense for Laila because they spoke in same language laughed at the same joke everything from looking alike to food are same, then she was shown the map that divided the nation. Laila's parents did not take any step to tell Laila about India, the fact that Laila's parents were ignorant about their own heritage Laila's identity as an Indian didn't form, "inviting Mr. Pirzada for dinner is actually tantamount to an articulation of cultural sameness, which is indeed a kind of culture of practice" (Chakraborty, page 3). According to Chakraborty, the identity of the child started to form when Mr. Pirzada came to visit. this triggered her mind to move forward from cultural ignorance that she faces her understanding of the two culture made her dependency more clear to her.

Laila had the chance to find the differences and understand her barrier by meeting Mr. Pirzada, but Mrs. Das and Mr. Kapasi from 'Interpreter of Maladies' was aware of their heritage and chose to be undermined by the boundaries of it. Both of the character is extremely ambitious and had to sacrifice their dreams to be true to their culture. The dreams

of Mr. Kapasi and Mrs. Das have been changed because of the harsh reality and they both feel the pain of losing their ambition, they shared different duty and ambition but they understood each other's sadness as both of them had the same limitation. Mrs. Das's inability to perform her duty as an Indian wife and mother works as a guilt factor which makes her open up to a stranger, she thinks because Mr. Kapasi is an interpreter of languages he will translate her guilty feeling. Mr. Kapasi's leaving his ambition to be stuck in the dead end job to make ends meet for the family, he leaves his ambition because of the duties he needs to fulfill. The difference of the responsibilities and how both of them treat their own responsibilities makes them realize their mistake. The connection of guilt ends with the trip because of the ignorance and denial of the mistakes, "knowing that this was the picture of the Das family he would preserve forever in his mind" (page 69). This picture works as the reminder of failure and unforgiving mistake that will remain in their memory forever.

Mr. Kapasi and Mrs. Das had the chance to deny their mistake and can choose to overlook it but Mr. Sen from 'Mrs. Sen' has nowhere to go with her desperation and loneliness.

'Mrs. Sen' is a story of a woman who is going through the process of settling in a new land, her falling back to her identity as an Indian and never moving on is the dependency she suffers from. Eliot is an eleven year old who closely observes the family as he is fascinated by the new culture and his new baby-sitter. Eliot works as a voice which announces the problems Mr. Sen has while adjusting to the American culture. Eliot gets fascinated by the things that she does while he is in their house, he talks about a special blade that she uses to cut the vegetables and fish thus he is entering into a new world of culture, "She bought the blade from India, where apparently there was at least one in every household" (page 115).

This shows how Mrs. Sen is referring to her Indian heritage, she refuses to fit into the new land and that leaves her identity undeveloped. She shares her life and her thought with Eliot this explains her extreme lonesomeness, her inability to sleep at night because of too much silence “Here in this place where Mr.Sen has bought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in so much silence” (Page 115) her constant waiting for some news from home and her way of going back to the family on every topic is an indication of longing back to the roots.

Her identity as a sane human breaks down when she is isolated and separated from her known territory. The high point of her identity dependency, was when she realized that she is completely away from her home, she would listen to the tape she gets from home and say delusional assumption like “Could I drive all the way to Calcutta? How long would that take Eliot? Ten thousand miles, at fifty miles per hour?” (page,119). According to Sciortino the communication is the vital reason why Mr. Sen lost her mental stability,

“Lack of communication and miscommunication often lead her characters to feel emotionally isolated and to suffer from cultural displacement. This is particularly true for immigrants who feel divided between the customs of their homeland and those of their adopted society.”(Sciortino, 15).

As her identity was breaking down by the isolation from the world her desperate attempt for fitting resulted in rush decision of driving the car without proper training. She thought that this will change the outside's view of her but the plan backfired as she had an accident that resulted into losing her only connection to the new world Eliot. After the accident and emotional breakdown Mr.Sen put her into more isolated environment this helps her delusion to grow and finally she gives her identity up to confusion.



Lahiri at the end of the short story collection introduces a semi autobiographical story of struggle and gain after expressing the problems in a foreign land , ‘The Third and Final Continent’ Lahiri shares her father’s story through a man in emotional pain travels to England for a better future and to escape the pain of losing his mother, this story is the only one that highlights the journey of a man in 1964 by a ship and the character travels from Calcutta-London-America thus the diversity of three continent. The narrator is the one who deals with identity crisis; he escapes his pain of losing a dear one by escaping from the country. His journey through these countries and the people he meets shape up his identity and brings back memory from his past and also helps him to forget the past and start a new beginning.

These major dependency of the characters makes their journey towards transformation more evident as by being dependent they face the need to transform, Hegel in Lordship and Bondage talks about this certain kind of independence that makes the self consciousness realize the true self by seeing the other and realizing one’s own faults, “first, it must proceed to supersede the other independent being in order thereby to become certain of itself as the essential being; in so doing it proceeds to supersede its onself, for this other is itself” ( pg 111, point 180). In two books, the concept of realization happens by seeing the other character fail miserable. The characters like Nazneen, Liala, Mr. Kapasi and the narrator from ‘The Third and Final Continent’ understands this failure and transforms into a true person.

## Chapter two:

### Transformation of the characters:

“Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exile are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that to borrow a phrase from music-is contrapuntal” (Said, 186) in Saied’s ‘Reflection on Exile’ the concept of exile is viewed as an experience that lets people compare their own life and culture with the other. He talks about a sense of achievement of the native, the winning feeling that he or she has by able to correspond side by side with a foreign culture. This sense of achievement produces certain changes in identity of a migrant they start to transform themselves and their cultural practice and ad the habits of the foreign land in their own culture. Finally, the migrant finds their self- consciousness and starts understanding the flaws in their current living; through according to Said “Exile moves according to a different calendar, and is less seasonal and settled than life at home” (Pg, 186) but he later states how this fast movement in culture and identity shapes the main purpose which is, finding their oneself in actual words finding their ‘Identity’ . In both books *Brick lane* and *Interpreters of Maladies* the transformation is shown as a vital turn of the characters identity, like Said says all the transformation does not occur in a settled form, for example, few characters transform into opposite direction that meaning they change into being more nationalistic and religious which explains the sudden vertical change in their characters. Self consciousness is found in many forms whether it’s by acknowledging the fact

of being alienated or just realizing the native heritage, this chapter will look at this consciousness through the characters of migration.

*Brick Lane* by Monica Ali

Transformation in the book is defined by the ability to adopt in a society. The character that develops and continues to develop even after their full transformation is the hero of the book. Depression, Home sick, desire, deceive and finally religious shapes a lot of character in *Brick lane*. Nazneen, Chanu, Karim are the main protagonist who is portrayed as a representation of Bengali Diaspora generation; they go through radical transformation and changes their destiny.

The point of transformation for Nazneen happened when she first took the big step out of her home; it looked like she wanted to run away from the reality. She took the longest walk and she kept on walking until she felt lost, the most important part of this walk is the fact that for the first time in her life she spoke in English with a stranger. by doing so self confidence that was needed for her to change become aware was gained, now her reality started to shift she realize that she didn' t needed to feel lost like all the women in Brick Lane. She removed one barrier on her own but when she went back to the overloading apartment, she felt trapped again, the furniture in the apartment works symbolic of the nonsense barrier that can be broken by Nazneen. Chanu gathers bunch of stuff that is not necessary for their home they create a barrier for her the barrier of baggage and disappointment. The novel gives a lot of metaphorical incident that shows how trapped Nazneen feels in her family, her depression are shown through real live incident for example, When Chanu and her two daughters where watching the attack in the Twin Tower and all the survivors were trapped inside, it seems that

Nazneen feels trapped in the book, she is trapped in this life where she looks free but her true identity is hiding somewhere waiting to be found by her. In the transformation chapter the process of her finding self-identity will be discussed.

Nazneen's major transformation in her identity occurred when she starts fascinating about the snowstorms or snow globes from Dr. Azad. The tiny glass full of snow starts to mesmerize her, and she gets amazed in how a simple shake fills the globe with snow. Aazad explains true meaning of the globe and says that the globe are similar to life and the struggle that it brings, he says if you (Nazneen) are strong and confident in your life than everything including a storm will sooth itself down. Nazneen seems to understand Dr. Aazads metaphoric use of snowglobe and this is a symbolic term of her realization of her identity.

Not knowing about her identity and future, Nazneen goes through some life changing changes as she stars working to fix the loan Chanu took from Mrs. Islam. she starts taking control of the families financial situation that makes her powerful enough to think about herself. In the mean time she starts having an extra marital affair with Karim according to Bnerjee the reason behind Nazneen facing difficulties in life is the complex situation of self realization she is into,

“The Stress of her affair, the conflict between her dawning self will and her upbringing of uncomplaining acceptance Chanu's Determination to return to Bangladesh, Shahana's steadfast refusal to do so and her own ambivalence towards this, along with the fraught father---daughter relationship, takes its toll on Nazneen and she collapses.” (pg, 47)

She collapses not only physically but also morally the change she goes through when she falls in love with Karim is the high point of her transformation, she hides the affair from everyone she knows and then single handedly ends it in correct time. Her identical growth as a person is expressed in the last time she speaks to him,

“She touched his hand for the last time.” Oh, Karim, that we have already done. But always there was a problem between us. How can I explain? I wasn't me, and you weren't you. From the very beginning to the very end, we didn't see things. What we did--we made each other up." (Ali, pg, 382)

Her realization of her self-consciousness is the final transformation she goes through, she embraces her change and reaches for her dream. The novel ends with the scene where Nazneen is taken to an ice skating ground to celebrate her freedom. This is the representation of the dream she has of snow and ice by freeing herself from the barrier of un-respectful house life the character fulfilled her transformation and became started feeling a free agent. She became a woman of self realized and transforms into an independent person her husband Chanu refuses to be in a real world and treats the emigrant life as a life of high achievement thus failing to understand his true potential and worth in Britain facing defeat at the end.

Chanu is the only character who doesn't moderately change with self realization; he starts with a high hope of being somebody big in the English society and gets the opposite of his dreams. He doesn't transform for good or for bad the major transformation in his character is his later realization of his own worth; at the end he leaves the country he had came to with hope and dreams. His dream of being successful never gets fulfilled and he fails to gather significant amount to go back home, his identity of a Bengali man( who provides for his

family) in the foreign land is lost as he fails to provide for his family and makes his wife work at home for money.

“When I came I was a young man. I had ambitions, big dreams. When I got off the plane, I had my degree certificate in my suit-case. I thought there would be a red carpet laid out for me. I was going to join the civil service and become Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. That was my plan. And I found things were a bit different” (Ali, pg 21).

The big dreams and the success that he wanted in his life shapes a false identity around him and he fails to understand his true worth and instead of trying to improve it he lives in a false identity where he thinks he is the ‘intellectual’ and everybody else has no education at all. Chanu would refer to the fellow Bengalis as low class and unrefined “These people are basically peasants and they miss the land. The pull of the land is stronger even than the pull of blood.” (Ali, 65) his fake identity gets the better of him as he tries to set himself apart from the rest, in doing so he is losing his true identity to the fake. He fails to transform into the his fake identity thus as a result he fails himself he admits defeat and says, “I can’t stay,” said Chanu, and they clung to each other inside a sadness that went beyond words and tears, beyond that place, those causes and consequences, and became a part of their breath, their marrow, to travel with them from now to wherever they went.” (Ali, page 565). Chanu losses his own self in false identity but there are other characters who shine over their identity transform into something completely opposite their nature.

Karim is the character in the novel that surprises through his transformation, he starts from a Bangladeshi British boy who is modern in thinking and turns into a religious man who suffers from guilt and redemption from his deeds. Karim ’ s personal life is mentioned very

less but there is a complete identity crisis there, he feels disconnected to his father and to his heritage as he had never been to his native country so to feel connected he creates a group

“An exaggerated sense of group solidarity, and a passionate hostility to outsiders, even those who may in fact be in the same predicament as you” (Said, 178) so according to Said the only way an migrant character can connect to the native land on a foreign land is creating a group that feels alike . He starts questioning his relationship with his work and Nazneen, in the beginning the portrayal of Karim is as a ruthless boy who gets what he wants even if it is Nazneen, a married women mother of two daughters but gradually his weakness and transformation is shown. He starts his transformation with the group and with his relationship with Nazneen, his relationship with Nazneen matures and he starts looking for redemption that can relieve him of his guilt. Self realization in his character is important as this is the point he transforms, he loses his own self and identity in order to feel connected. The result of such transformation is the fact that he lets go of his love and becomes dependent on the group to support his identity.

#### *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri

Lahiri uses her observation ability, together with her personal experiences, to create stories that transform the character into human being with personal flaws. The characters that get transformed in the book are mostly dependent on the notion of homeland; Laila, Mr. Kapasi, Mrs. Das. Mrs Sen and the narrator of the last story go through the same confusion of where they belong this question shape their characters in the end.

In the story 'When Mr. Pirzada came to Dine' Laila is the main character that goes through transformation as it was discussed in the first chapter she began to understand her heritage. Her thought of an Indian man and culture changes when she meets Mr. Pirzada "He was a compact man, and though his feet were perpetually splayed and his belly slightly wide, he never the less maintained an indifferent posture" (page, 27) he is described by Laila as a man who leads his life with honor and dignity. There are many conflict, between the two characters as they suffer from cultural identity transformation; according to Chakraborty, the fact that the characters celebrates the festival Halloween is an indication of acceptance and the uneasiness that comes with it, "symbolically and implicitly shows that the coexistence of Halloween and Mr. Pirzada (the desire for root) is perhaps not possible.....It is evident that Lila and her mother enjoy the Halloween festival without any feeling of being discriminated or being imposed upon.( Chakraborty, page 4) . the biggest transformation in Lila's character happened when Mr. Pirzada's family and land was in crisis, all the people in the room Lila, her mother, father and Mr. Pirzada came together because of their belonging to the roots "most of all I remember the three of them operating during that time as if they were a single person, sharing a single meal, a single body, a single silence, a single fear" (page, 41). The unity defines the character as their identity even though they are from different continents and homeland they are united in crisis, this shape the idea of morality and unity of Indian continent people in Laila's mind. The transformation is complete when she pays and hopes for the betterment of Mr. Pirzada and his family her feelings for the native land and the people mark the final step, at the end, the narrator writes-



.....It was only then, raising my water glass in his name, that I knew what it meant to miss someone who was so many miles and hours away, just as he had missed his wife and daughter for so many months.....my parents predicted, correctly, that, we would never see him again. Since January, each night before bed, I had continued to eat, for the sake of Mr. Pirzada's family, a piece of candy I had saved from Halloween. That night there was no need to. Eventually, I threw them away (Page, 46).

Laila goes through transformation of finding her own heritage but in 'Interpreter of Maladies' the characters go through the realization of their transformation in the story. Mr. Kapasi and Mrs. Das are not aware of their dream and desire by admitting their guilt to each other they release their dreams. According to Said "exiles look at non-exile with resentment. They belong in their surroundings, you feel, whereas an exile is always out of place. What is it like to be born in a place, to stay and live there, to know that you are of it, more or less forever?" (pg, 85). This is the case for Mrs. Das she goes through identity crisis in both countries she feels connected to the interpreter because he can translate the language in her case the loneliness she faces. The story unveils some major issues among the immigrant parents and children like - the emptiness of faith and love among the immigrant parents as they act quite careless towards their children, Mr. Das and Mrs. Das acts friendly and cold towards their children and there we see the difference between the two different cultures colliding, as the American parents give their children freedom and space follow their own dream, not like the Indian parents who are always sacrificing their dreams and desire for their children. The fact that Mrs. Das thinks of interpreter as a respectful job that takes Mr. Kapasi to a flashback to his past. To his dream of becoming something big in

the diplomatic department, here Lahiri introduced the major theme of the story 'Failure', the job that he has as an interpreter and a guide is not a achievement for Kapasi it's a reminder of failure dream that he had and "to him it was a thankless occupation" (page 51). The major point that connects them to their failure is the reason that changes them, they start realizing the true reality of their personal limitation.

'Mrs. Sen' identity suffers from culture duality from the moment she came to America, her husband is a man who is considered about the difficulties she faces at a new place, as he is a full time worker Eliot become the person who Mr.sen talks o the most. She shares her life and her thought with Eliot. In the story Both characters are shown as representation of the two society for example the child is the one who is explaining the society with his terms, in shape of Mrs. Sen. the continental exotic land is described where everything is different than Eliot's world and the fact that she is losing her mental stability to build her identity is shown as a cultural miscommunication that is presumed by writers to be very common among migrants "Her failure to learn to drive is the motif through which Lahiri demonstrates Mrs Sen's ongoing sense of cultural displacement" (Sciortino, 17) and through Eliot and his mother the modern new land of miscommunication and isolation is shown, "She represents the failure of society to bridge the cultural divide through communication and is uncomfortable" (Sciortino, 18), these two representation of the two cultures are important as it shapes the transformation of Mr. Sen. Her lonesome and isolation are the reasons for transformation she faces in life, her inability to connect with the new culture transforms her life into a caged prison. Finally at the end she faces the life of imprisonment in the foreign land.

In 'The Third and the Final Continent' the identity of the narrator is very much the one who deals with transformation; He is born in Asia and then went to London in search of a new life from where he is shifted to America as an immigrant. His journey through these countries and the people he meets shape up his identity and brings back memory from his past. Even though he is a British student, he finds his way into his heritage by living with the same kind of immigrant and eating pots of 'Egg curry'. His identity in London was partly diluted as he was always with the people from Asia. On his way to the new job he got married to a girl named 'Mala' who has no connection with him at all, their life as a married couple also shapes the narrator's identity. His life in America is significant because he suffers from not only one culture experience but two, his move from India to Britain following Indian norms to survive there and then from Britain to America where he had to rely on his British customs to fit in. these experiences of meeting different people and seeing their life led the protagonist to reveal the past pain; he suffocates from the memories that make him lose his identity, the constant suffocation reminds him of the time he left his home "the noise was constantly distracting, at times suffocating felt it deep in my ribs, just as I had felt the furious drone of the engine on the SS Roma"(page, 175). His only connection within the city is the landlord that reminds him of his mother, her kindness and her daughters' griseous welcome made his leaving in the new city less isolated, Mrs.Coft is the person who transforms his identity as she shows the need of staying alive and facing world no matter in which shape you are. He wonders why this woman has survived so long alone and still is strong and has longing for life where his mother at an early age died, he questions her living and at the same time admires her enough to remember her and talk to his children about her. He shaped and molded his identity by the guide line of Mrs.Coft as now he owns a similar

house in a far away town from Boston. His wife's personality and identity changed as well as she now became more used to the foreign culture, he himself acknowledge the changes by saying "mala no longer drapes the end of her sari over her head, or weeps at night for her parents, but occasionally she weeps for her son" (page 197) but her identity as an Indian house wife remains the same as even she adopted the changes in her life but still she holds her Indian spirit alive in her and she continues to be a Indian women in a foreign land.

The transformation all this character has are the symbols of their understanding of their true self, as Hegel says the true notion of recognizing oneself is the way to be independent and have an idea of self consciousness of their own, "the process of this pure notion of recognition, of the duplicating of self-consciousness in its oneness, appears to self-consciousness" (pg, 185). This marks the start of the independence that will finally remove the barrier and suffocation for most of the characters. By gaining self consciousness, most of them finally accept their reality and starts living a life of meaning and independence.

## Chapter three:

The final step of identity formation; Independence of the characters

“Hugo of St. Victor, a twelfth-century monk from Saxony makes it clear twice that the “strong” or “perfect” man achieves independence and detachment by working through attachments, not by rejecting them. Exile is predicated on the existence of, love for, and bond with, one’s native place; what is true of all exile is not that home and love of home are lost, but that loss is inherent in the very existence of both.” (Said, 187) so for the perfect independent migrant character example will be the one who rises above all complication and variation of life. The essay also says the love and affection for the native land should not be lost but the independent characters should find their inspiration from the bond of their land. *Brick lane* and *Interpreter of Maladies* portrayed characters that shine into this example of perfect migrant; these characters go through the extreme separation of identity and culture but like a ‘strong’ man introduced by Hugo wins over these obstacles and earn their independence.

Exile for many characters in the book works as the beneficial aspect in building up their identity, as the previous chapters discussed the dependent and transformation of exile characters, this chapter will discuss the final completion of identity development

“independence” . The idea of independence is gradually achieved in the foreign land; the exile had to win through several barriers to get to the stage of mental independence.

*Brick lane* by Monica Ali

Independence in the book is represented by the steps that Nazneen and Karim take to become the representation of two groups of immigrants; these two groups are the first generation who finds their individuality and the second generation who finds their native connection. Both the character suffer from beginning to end of their dependence and gradually transform into an independent individual who is capable to fit in the both native and foreign culture.

Nazneen from the start depends on the fate or man to guide her through her life but all of this starts to change when she finds confidence in change. Changing and becoming a new independent individual did not happen overnight, according to Lone the changes came in gradually through actions that was taken by Nazneen through her journey at a new land,

“Very gradually she starts to break away from the thought of predestination which has influenced most of her life and to take steps towards an independent life, making her own decisions” (Lone, 47).

The first action towards independence she took was questioning the path of predestination with her first child Raquib, when Raquib was hospitalized nearly dead Nazneen fought her mother’s idea of living it on Fate she took her son to a hospital and nursed her son back to health. Through at the end Raquib’s health fails again and he dies of illness but for a few days Nazneen was happy to take the matter into her own hand and being able to nurse her son. According to Lone, it is the first action she took that meant something to her and she knew it’s a beginning of her independence, “This is probably the first time in her life that

she acts out of her own free will and that she understands that action can be vital” (page, 42). This is the biggest step she took as in the previous chapter it is shown how dependent she was on fate and predestination. The ideology of her mother when she was ill has been broken by Nazneen and this broken ideology gives her identity that her mother had missed to gain.

The second step she took was when she proposed to her husband to work to earn for the family through her intention was to save for the return home trip but she stood against conventional Bengali culture. She convinced Chanu to buy a sewing machine and thus started earning for herself, ‘she feels independent’ this became her source of income and confidence to face Mrs Islam. For the first time in Nazneens’ life, she is in-charge of her own life she starts taking all the financial and domestic decision and that makes her capable of to standing for herself. She gradually starts taking control of her own life. Nazneen becomes confident enough to question her life as she begins to feel suffocated in her marriage thus resulting into her fourth action to announce her independence. The affair with Karim is the final step she took to go against her tradition and predestination; this action made her more in control as she started to take her own life decision herself, “for the first time in her life she becomes the dominant part in a relationship with a man. In this respect she is challenging her cultural background, her religion and her marriage.” (Lone, 43) Lone explains the reason why Nazneen went from being the faithful wife to a dominant mistress; she says the challenges that she took against her culture and religion made her come out of her mother’s concept of ‘living it to her fate’ and be this new women who takes her independent decision.

After she came out of her barrier, she acknowledged her problems and her limitations. According to Lone, Nazneen starts to learn about politics and dominant aspects of countries from Karim, Chanu never took interest in her and he never taught her about the world on the other hand Karim shows her a world where she can know and learn about different things a world where she matters. Lone argues that this is the reason for their end of the affair “But his knowledge also makes Nazneen aware of her own lack of education and knowledge, One day she attends a political meeting with him” (pg, 43). The power that Karim had over Nazneen, the power of knowledge began to backfire when he explains the religious aspect of their relationship to her. Nazneen realizes that Karim started to believe that she has dependent on him to live this free life thus resulting her to end the relationship. This is the final dependency she had and eventually she overcomes it.

All this action she took to announce her independence is just a buildup for the final resolution of her identity; she takes the most important and crucial decision of the book she decides to stay in London and raise her kids by her own. From the day she came to brick lane Chanu and Nazneen saved for the day they could go home but after all that suffering and hard work Nazneen decides to stay back. Lone discusses the decision as a step for Nazneen to pay respect of her new found independence, “She is not the submissive, passive wife any longer, and she has gained the strength to take control of her own life.” (Pg, 44) it is clear to the readers that Nazneen is now independent and free of Fate.

“Brick Lane begins with a Nazneen who was sold to the pawnshop of fate and ends with a Nazneen who is enterprising enough to attempt ice-skating wearing a sari” (Haque, pg 3).



This is the line that Haque describes the character in and through the chapter we do see the amazing change and personal growth she has for example, Nazneen has been obsessing about ice-skating; she would watch only the skating competition and at the end by doing ice-skating herself she achieved her fantasy, reached the ultimate resolution of her character. Nazneen succeeds Ali's representation of the first generation successful emigrant who survives the new nation and finds their true identity. She also pays attention to the other group, the second generation who are the offspring of the new found identity emigrant their journey is different they face the alienation from the two nation their motherland and their home land. Karim who is the most developed character from second generation finds his identity as a Bangladeshi Muslim through his journey as a Diaspora migrant.

Karim's character development happens from the first time he steps into Nazneen's apartment, what Karim did for Nazneen is that he became the substitute of Chanu; all the missing qualities of Chanu were in Karim. According to Banerjee, the pair was capable of filling up each other's lacking, Karim's lack of knowledge about the native land, religion and love was fulfilled by Nazneen's presence in his life, "Nazneen embarks on a secretive, bold and passionate affair with him. Karim also engages Nazneen critically in her faith" she also argues the affair with Nazneen make him realize about the religious steps he needed to take to be a Muslim. From being an unreligious man he became a leader of a London based religious group, his activity after the group selection was the major development in his character. His approach and appearance towards the affair begin to change; he becomes more devoted to Islam and started questioning his relationship with Nazneen. This makes the final transition of his identity as he starts behaving like a Bengali man driven by his culture

and religion. Monica Ali portrays two different transitions of both of the character she explains the action they take and why this action changes their course of identity and make them independent from their barrier.

*Interpreter of maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri:

Independence in this collection of short stories is shown only through a few characters. Lahiri builds her characters around the immigrant experience and the cultural divide between America and India. To make the characters believable at the same time she portrays them, with sympathy and understanding, permanent characters that experience the pain and suffering of ordinary people. The journey of the emigrant from being in depth of their barrier into shining as an independent individual is very rare in the stories only Laila and the omniscient narrator of 'The Third and The Final Continent' makes their way in changing their thinking; overtakes their barrier to become independent from themselves.

Laila being an Indian American girl born within the foreign tradition is the narrator of 'When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine' as discussed in the previous chapter is unknown about her native land Mr. Pirzada is the only reflection of the native land she has, her independence is the affection and connection she has on her own for her native land. Laila gets the connection and reality of her identity from Pirzada but she herself makes the transformation from being ignorant of her culture to a curious child eager to know the country. She overcomes the distance barrier and connects to India. According to Dhritiman the dilemma and confusion she has of her native land is common because she is an emigrant who is unknown of her native culture, "The inter-mingling between the Oriental and the Occidental

is very subtly portrayed through Lila. Her confusions, her encounters are the literal enactment of what a migrant initially comes across” (page, 5). He discusses the combine factor of the oriental and exotic being and comes to a conclusion of Lailas’ identity development; Laila develops her own identity by being aware of Mr. Pirzadas’ identity. In the previous chapter, the transformation of her motive and how she starts understanding her own native place is discussed; she takes the first step to know the map boundaries of India and finally joins her family to know about the war in 1971. Her independence in loving her own nation is shown by how she uses the Halloween candy to have a bet with god for the wellbeing of Mr. Pirzadas’ family, by doing so she is showing solidarity to the land she is unaware off.

The final news from Mr. Pirzada by a telegram, he being united with them will remain a memory of the time when Laila and her family felt the suffering of a fellow native man; Lailas’ final resolution in being an independent Indian Diaspora is succeeded at the end as she understands the bond of the native to its motherland. Laila discovers the bond by knowing about her country but the first generation emigrant faces difficulties of never recovering from their past and depending on the painful memories to keep them hang onto their native land .

In ‘The Third and the Final Continent’ the independent character is the narrator who is reunited with his feeling of affection after being haunted by the memory of his dead mother. Although he has adapted to the British way of life as a student, it is not a true cultural integration as he lives in a ‘house occupied entirely by penniless Bengali bachelors like

[himself]' (p.173). He attempts to keep his cultural identity intact by keeping the most trivial of Indian traditions alive, such as eating 'egg curry' (p.173). When he is posted in America his identity as an Indian man gets more confused as now he has to rely on his British culture to fit in the new land. His search for independent personality is further more deluded by the movement around continent. The speaker is burdened with a fragmented sense of identity; constantly pulled in opposite directions between Indian culture and the need to absorb in America. When he meets his centenarian landlady, Mrs Croft, he is bewildered by her age and her repetitious phrases while admiring her strength in surviving for so long. He gets the idea of an individual life respectful life from Mrs. Croft; his want of staying alive makes him free from the cultural and emotional barrier and at the end he declares his journey as an achievement.

In contrast with the narrator, his wife Mala is able to maintain her identity because she takes on the role of a traditional Indian wife. The speaker finds their relationship strained, however – they were 'strangers' (p.192) – until during a visit to Mrs Croft, who measures Mala through her own innate sense of good manners rather than her exotic dissimilarities to the American ideal, declares her to be 'a perfect lady' (p.195). The narrator sees only their differences, whereas Mrs Croft appreciates Mala's grace and charm. The narrator's ability to adjust is Lahiri points out, human adaptation. He has discovered that the ability to feel at home no matter what country he lives in comes only from having a strong sense of self. And by feeling at home in other land made the narrator independent, they finally know their own self individual identity.

At the end 'Human Adaptation' is the only way to gain independence in a new land. The character that took the new life and manages to mix it with their culture became successful in achieving the new identity. Said talks about the exile who manages to discover their true self in the land of other in 'Reflection on Exile' he says the exile works as a form of trial for the individual to find their self worth; and by finding this one can truly become independent.

## Conclusion:

### The Pros and Cons of Identity development in the Characters

Both Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Interpreter of Maladies* are books of fiction; in what the main concern is how one's identity deforms and remakes in realization of fictional space. Both of the writers are highly influenced by the post colonial Diaspora theory and as subject of Migration themselves, they are motivated by the idea of 'melting pot' identity that travels with the generations of Diaspora individual as a learned culture rather than inherited.

"The protagonists of the stories are portrayed initially as helpless and clueless migrants gripped by the massive changes in their life at a foreign land but gradually they become interested and progressive subjects as they stretch, change, adopt and modify their individual circumstances and therefore resolves into independent identity – making" (Banerjee, 85).

Here Banerjee explains the fundamental understanding of the migrant society, where he also introduces a point of argument, since many people in the world cannot wonder to pick, pluralize and dominate their identity at will; it is this concept of plurality that plays as a growing agency of the characters in both of the books. The characters through their experience of exile, develops a unique consciousness that their identity is less about cultural heritage and more about choosing to excel after the cultural bindings. Lahiri and Ali at their position as author's invalid space boundary of the characters, when they present identity as a result of social construct in the novel. Consequently the texts act as a dynamic representation of

identity achievement through hardship and self awareness. Hegel in his essay Lordship and bondage discusses about the struggle that leads to finding ones' own identity, he says the immediate consciousness that is gain in the first place is not the one that leads to self independence,

“not the immediate form in which it appears, not its submergence in the expanse of life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as a vanishing moment, that it is only pure being-for-self. The individual who has not risked his life may well be recognized as a person, but he has not attained to the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness” (page 114).

In light of Hegel's theory all the main characters of identity development like Nazneen, Karim, Laila, the narrator of 'The Third and Final Continent' was in a dependent and dominated state of consciousness by the past life of confusion and false identity but when they came to the foreign land they got exposed to struggle, brutality of reality and that made them achieve their true self independent consciousness. This development introduced several points of pros and cons by their identity independence. For example, Nazneen came to the new land with the hope of being a housewife and a good worker to Chanu but because she got faced with the reality of their economical position in England she started struggling and working to make it on her own. She realized it like other housewife around her as she followed their example and started working. As a result the women of Diaspora is shown to be powerful as migration gives them a chance of being something else than a 'good worker', it gives them the opportunity to gain freedom from working hard. In Karim's case he started to feel confused at

his immigrant life where he was imprisoned by the both culture and finally took the high road of religion to fall back on his identity, his act of becoming a spiritual group leader made him come close to his heritage. Laila started facing confusion about her identity when she started meeting Pirzada daily, her confusion was easily recovered as she choose to be an Indian and started respecting her heritage; this made her identity development through Hegel's theory a perfect self recognizing agent as she overcomes her own confusion by gaining to self recognize through Mr. Pirzada.

The idea of choosing an identity defined by the context of culture and surroundings not by ones heritage is a difficult adjustment for a lot of people and according to Hegel theory this is the struggle that the migrant consciousness go through to achieve independence, they survive the outside worlds' reality to be known a individual identity holder by their own culture. This thesis has discussed identity as a form of explaining the migrants experience and development of their personality as an individual. To prove this point well I choose these books as they represent the various type of immigrant and explains their life of struggle that is common in Diaspora life. Lahiri and Ali successfully covers all the major issues such as, the migrant finding a new home, having a doubt about their existence, barrier of language and culture, confused family life, conflict of understanding homeland between first and second generation emigrants; this topics makes the books a good subject of analyzing physiological development as this centre around the characters.

The limitation of this paper is the limited amount of comminute that has being used as example of Diaspora, only Hindu and Muslim community is discussed. Through the limitation are quite visible but the idea of identity crisis is explained in general version and this help the paper to be



useful to understand any country or religious' migrant ideology. As Said commented in *Reflection on Exile*, he commented about the exiles of Jews, Palestine and Armenians as universal phenomena of exile people, he says all this exile population for the same pain and suffering in religion and nationalism is later described as migration and that makes the theory of exile applicable for any migration and Diaspora generation. He talks about the territory beyond not-belonging and 'us' 'outsiders' conflict, a place where people is united because of their banishment.

And just beyond the frontier between 'us' and the 'outsiders' is the perilous territory of not-belonging; this is to where in a primitive time peoples were banished, and where in modern era immense aggregates of humanity loiter as refugees and displace person. (pg, 104)

At the end it can be stated that this thesis argues the changes and the dynamic transformation of the characters in both of the book helps prove the Diaspora Culture as a form of a mixed culture where adapting to situation and changing lifestyle is allowed. Gender role change, younger generation understanding life better, achieving perfect resolution by challenging oneself, realizing one true self by facing the reality and finally settling in completely new place and making it their home is the ultimate identity independence, this are the major point that is focused in the paper making it a refined analyzed paper of identity development in Diaspora literature.

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