

Cultural Dilemma in the Works of Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the cultural conflicts experienced by the fictional characters of Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri, two prominent Indian-American writers. The protagonists of their works usually originate from India and live in culturally plural societies in the USA and Canada. The simultaneous exposure of their fictional characters to both their home culture and the alien culture prompts them to undergo a sort of cultural conflict and spiritual crisis, leading to a dilemma over their cultural identity. These characters cannot sever their ties with the ancestral cultures they practiced back home in India, nor can they fully accept the values and beliefs practiced in the adopted land. As they belong to neither culture in the true sense, they, thus, are often alienated and depressed and suffer from an unending sense of nostalgia. They look for a home but never find it, as they constantly oscillate between the culture they were living in and the one they are now living in.

Keywords: *Immigrants, Cultural Conflicts, Dilemma, Assimilation, Reconciliation, Ambivalence.*

1. Introduction

The dilemma over culture holds a significant position in the works of Bharati Mukherjee (1940-2017) and Jhumpa Lahiri (1967-), two well-known contemporary Indian American diaspora writers writing in English. These two fictionists are popularly known for their realistic depictions of the cultural clash between the East and the West, as they narrate the experiences of immigrants who struggle to integrate and assimilate into the leading cultures of the countries they have immigrated to. Thus, the protagonists of their fiction are often caught between the Indian values and beliefs that they have left behind and an entirely different culture in the new world. They appear to dwindle between houses: one in India and the other in the USA. Such duality always pushes them to a dilemma over their cultural identity. Taking all these phenomena into consideration, the

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present paper intends to explore the following research questions, which appear to be significantly relevant to the narratives of these two fictionists:

- a) Does the fiction of Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri portray the dilemma of their protagonists, mainly living in North America, particularly in the United States?
- b) How do their works interpret the complex emotions and sentiments of the immigrant characters over the questions of their adaptation and acculturation in their new destinations?

Thus, the purpose of the paper is to shed light on the nature and issues of the dilemma of immigrant people living in North America as shown in the fiction of these two writers.

2. Methodology

To achieve the research goal, both primary and secondary sources of information have been duly consulted and reviewed. As a significant part of this procedure, Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri's novels and short stories feature protagonists who primarily undergo predicaments and traumatic experiences while encountering people and social settings in foreign lands, such as the USA and Canada. Personal interviews attended by both writers have been chosen for this paper as primary sources of information. On the other hand, critical books on their works, research articles, newspaper features, website information, etc., have been consulted as the secondary sources of information for this paper.

3. Literature Review

Mane (2015) reveals that the fictional characters of Mukherjee appear to be locked in two identities, since they cannot easily move away from their native culture and at the same time, they also find it difficult to welcome the dominant culture. Thus, they are pushed to an impasse (p. 621). Similarly, the fictional characters of Lahiri are also found uprooted from the protected and friendly traditional set-up in the native land while struggling hard to survive in the new setting (Priyadarshini 2016, p. 51). However, the clash of culture is universal and worldwide as Bhatia & Ram (2001) point out that in a multicultural setting, the immigrant people go through "the same kind of acculturation process" in terms of their 'psychological' formation. (p. 1). Again, acculturation processes are intricate and have often been treated in literature in ambiguous and varying ways (Berry & Sam 1997, p. 302). Thus, "immigrants have always been torn between preserving the old and assimilating to the new" (Brians 2003, p. 123). On the other hand, in an interview with Klaus Stierstorfer, Homi K. Bhabha (2017), a key thinker of contemporary postcolonial studies, sees immigrant people's such

an experience and their movement from 'home' to 'world' and their occasional return to home and going back to the world again as a scope of cultural interaction leading different cultures to get assimilated resulting in the birth of a hybrid culture. Despite such 'hybridization' and 'mimicry', Bhabha believes, there is always a 'difference' between the natives and the immigrants or the expatriates. Immigrant people are often found not to show much interest in adopting the new culture; rather, they tend to exhibit a sense of belonging to their lived life and the most familiar places. On the contrary, the natives do not welcome them heartily either. Thus, in between the state of acceptance and rejection, there is a space of vacillation which Bhabha defines as 'ambivalence'. Under such circumstances, diaspora people tend to create their own space. Bhabha defines this newly created space as 'Third Space'. The immigrants, falling under the processes of minoritization, are found to try to get translated, in other words, to integrate with the dominant culture, but often in vain.

4. Discussion on the Authors' Relevant Works and Contextualizing Critics' Observation

As a prominent Indian American diaspora writer, the works of Bharati Mukherjee investigate how the Indian immigrants lead their lives in North America, particularly in the United States of America, and focus primarily on Indian women's pursuit of self-realization. In her works, Mukherjee mainly investigates the concepts of 'exile' and 'home', discussing the individuals who struggle for identity. She examines how immigrants continually strive to preserve their own culture while adapting to a new society. Thus, her fictional characters often find themselves in a big dilemma, trying to strike a balance between the two clashing cultures. Mukherjee's early works, *Tiger's Daughter* (1992) and *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977), primarily explore the encounters between cultures that occur when her protagonists, who have immigrated to Canada or the United States, return as visitors to their native places in India. Thus, the loss of identity, alienation, and culture shock become paramount in *The Tiger's Daughter*, Mukherjee's first novel, where Tara Banerjee, the protagonist, cannot fully adjust herself to American culture and grievously experiences a 'double shock' after her reentry to her ancestral land after seven years of exile. "This is a predicament in which most of the Asian Americans find themselves. After assimilating into a new culture, regaining connections with the native culture is difficult" (Mane 2015, p. 624). *The Tiger's Daughter*, thus, appears to be a fictionalized account of Mukherjee's experiences during the early years of her marriage and her returning home. "This first novel addresses Mukherjee's personal difficulties of being caught between two worlds, home and exile" (Pawar 2012, n.p.). The novel reveals the conflict between the ideals of the Eastern and Western worlds. Tara

was born in Calcutta, received an education in the United States, and got married with an American gentleman. After living a straight seven years abroad, she returns to India. On her arrival, she finds her homeland full of riots, unrest, and strikes which are quite different from the place that she left seven years ago. However, Tara tries to reconcile the old world, the world of her ancestors, with the one of David, her husband. Here, Mukherjee elucidates the ceaseless struggle of diaspora people trying for a settlement between 'exile' and 'home'. The concept of 'home' carries huge significance in one's life and is deeply attached to one's existence. 'Home', which ensures shelter, security, stability, and comfort, provides one with a sense of belongingness or one's own existence and identity. But Tara's present Calcutta home cannot fulfill all those promises; rather, she feels awkward and hesitant there, mostly because her family, society, and Indian culture do not welcome her marital tie with a foreigner. "In India, she felt she was not married to a person but to a foreigner, and this foreignness was a burden. It was hard for her to talk about marriage responsibilities in Camac Street, her friends were curious only about the adjustments she had made" (Mukherjee 1992, p. 62). About Tara's current position, Bhaumik (2015) notes that Tara tries hard to merge with a diametrically opposite world, but like many other female characters of Mukherjee's works, she is also found to be tattered between two cultural identities, between her anchoring in an alien land and her longing for her motherland (n.p.).

In *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977), an autobiographical narrative, Bharati Mukherjee explores the cultural tensions she experiences upon returning to her homeland as a Canadian citizen. This distinctive work, a joint venture of Mukherjee and her husband, Clark Blaise, was written during their sabbatical leave, which they spent in India in the years 1973-74. However, Mukherjee's chapters of the book mainly manifest the lives of the urban upper-middle-class women with whom she grew up and attended school. However, she discovers that an abyss has developed, separating her from them. She primarily appears to get engrossed in compiling the stories of her friends and relatives, encompassing both joy and envy, as well as the psychological detachment from them. However, Mukherjee (1987) claimed in an interview that she "ended up writing ...an accidental autobiography" (p. 36). The book finally appears to turn out to be a traumatic experience for Mukherjee as she, while understanding and depicting the incidents and people around, found herself disillusioned by the present conditions of the city. In another interview, Mukherjee (1990) also expresses her feeling that even if the huge hardship she was undergoing while living in Canada, that was the new land where he wanted to live in, and the old world that means her ancestral land appeared dead to her (p. 15).

The Novel *Desirable Daughters* (2002) eloquently portrays the psychological skirmish between an Indian woman's yearning to cling to the values and beliefs of her ancestors and her aspiration to be a part of contemporaneous American society. The fictional work, which incorporates autobiographical elements to explore the immigrant experience of people of South Asian origin in the USA, tells the story of three West Bengal sisters who exhibit individualism in their pursuit of their unique ways of life. The story of the novel is narrated from the perspective of Tara Bhattacharjee, the protagonist, who is the youngest of the three Bengali sisters from an affluent and aristocratic family living in Calcutta and is properly raised, adequately maintaining the appropriate social norms and family values.

Tara Bhattacharjee is, indeed, named after Tara Lata, a direct ancestor of her, who, losing her bridegroom by the bite of a deadly snake on the night they were supposed to get married, underwent a condition of a lifetime's virginity as a part of her devotion to the departed soul of her dead husband. Modern Tara says about her ancient ancestor, "Tara Lata Gangooly had turned the tragedy of her husband's death and a lifetime's virginity into a model of selfless saintliness" (*Desirable Daughters*, p. 280). However, modern Tara differs from the traditional one, and she does not view her life as selfless as her ancestor. After moving to Silicon Valley with her husband, she starts ignoring and, to some extent, despising her upbringing, native values, and ethical concerns. Modern Tara has already divorced her husband. She maintains a white boyfriend and takes charge of her fully acculturated son. On the other hand, Padma, the oldest sister, earnestly trying to retain her Indianness in New Jersey, has appeared to be a perfect representative of the Indian expatriate. Parvati, another sister, has chosen to live in India, where she has an elegant family life. She adheres to the customary Indian norms with which she grew up. She also pleads with Tara not to get too much Americanized. Thus, the novel proves to deal with the dilemma over identity, native culture, and much-practiced family values, emphasizing the hardship of living between and the means of integrating two greatly diverse cultures.

A similar encounter is also found in her later works, where clashes between cultures occur in various contexts and forms. *Wife* (1975) serves as a notable example of cultural encounters between men and women. Dimple, the female protagonist of the fiction, is a middle-class married woman who expects to immigrate to a foreign land and settle down there forever. The dream comes true when she, with her husband, moves to New York. However, immediately after she came to America, her dream started turning into a nightmare. She feels neither happy with her marriage nor with her immigration; rather, she becomes

neurotic. Her wishes and wants from America and American people and society get shattered. She becomes completely disillusioned about her family life, gets involved in a sexual relation with an American boy, and later kills her husband. Thus, the novel becomes a psychosomatic documentation of a young married Bangali lady, who, on her way to adapting to a completely unfamiliar culture, experiences agonizing social, cultural, and psychological transformations. While evaluating the merit of the novel Joshi (2004) remarks, "... Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife* (1975) is one of the first Indian novels in English which treats at length the frustration and loneliness of the life of the Indian immigrants in an inhospitable, unfamiliar, new context in the person of a young Bengali housewife, Dimple..." (p. 83).

The novel *Jasmine* (2002), in which the protagonist Jasmine undergoes a profound transformation not only in geographical but also in emotional and cultural aspects, best illustrates the challenges of cultural transformation. Jasmine's husband, Prakash, sowed in her mind the dream of immigration and a better life in the USA. Unfortunately, Prakash was assassinated, and so, he could not make their dream come true. However, Jasmine is not someone to be defeated. She is probably born to win. She is always pushed forward by the dream her husband once cultivated. Thus, at a critical juncture of her life, she leaves India and, after roaming in various countries, enters the USA as an illegal immigrant. Diwan (2012) notes that America appears to Jasmine to be her calling and a vital part of her search for a liberal society and a tool to realize her husband Prakash's envisioned world. Diwan (2012) further says that the equal status, which the women in America enjoy, also charms Jasmine so much, (p. 1). Yet, after many years of exile, she is caught in the dilemma between the culture she is currently residing with and the culture she was born into. Jasmine speaks of herself: "I am not choosing between men. I am caught between the promise of America and old-world dutifulness" (*Jasmine* 2002, p. 240).

Mukherjee's *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) celebrates the new immigrants. Alam (1996) remarks that through the stories in *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988), Mukherjee tries to produce amazing "stories of the clash of culture" and interesting portrayals of people on move or "caught in the middle or split between an old world and a new world" (Alam 1996, p. 78). The characters of the stories in this collection seem to be very enthusiastic and exuberant over their lives on American soil.

The autobiographical narrator and main character of the first and titular story of the collection, "The Middleman," for instance, is Alfie Judah, a professional gunman from Iraq, who plays his trade as a middleman and, habitually for him, lives perilously for a couple of days in a central American Republic. He never

bothers about conscience and tries to reap success in turbulence and dread. “A Wife’s Story,” the second story of the collection, brings Mukherjee’s readers back to her best-loved narrator, an Indian wife in North America, who is about to break herself free from her kind. The third tale in the collection “Loose Ends” is told from the perspective of Jeb Marshall, a Vietnamese veteran who is haunted by the appalling experiences of war. The next story, “Orbiting,” presents Renata de Marcos, a second-generation American woman of Italian and Spanish descent, who is involved in a relationship with a gentleman from Afghanistan. The central reflector of “Fighting for the Rebound,” the fifth piece of the collection, is another American who is identified only as Griff and is being continuously asked to remain committed to his girlfriend Blanquita, a Filipino lady. While “The Tenant,” the first piece of the volume presented by a third-person narrator, brings the readers back to the well-known Mukherjee zone in which a Bengali woman usually get adrift in American society, “Fathering,” the sixth story, presents another Vietnam veteran who has to choose between the assertions made by his half-Vietnamese daughter and his white American common law wife on him. Next comes “Jasmine,” a story written from an omniscient point of view, mainly centers on a Trinidadian Indian teenager girl who is relishing the United States for the first time in her life. The eighth tale, “Danny Girls,” chronicles the effects of the passion of its unnamed narrator, an Indian teenager boy, who comes to the USA with his family from Uganda, accompanied by a Nepalese woman “imported” into the same country as a mail-order bride. “Buried Lives,” the third of the three tales in the volume, is presented from an omniscient viewpoint and traces the expeditions of Mr. Venkatesan, a Tamil from Sri Lanka, who is determined to immigrate to Canada. The last story, “The Management of Grief”, narrates the story of Mrs. Bhawe, an Indo-Canadian, who has recently lost many of her family members in a plane crash and is trying to get accustomed to the situation.

Thus, *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) takes readers to a new world created by immigrant people who, in many ways, are transformed and adapted to a new setting. They embody the immigrant people in all their splendor and diversity, reproduced in American eyes, which are similarly varied, with panic, distrust, or pure amazement. Hence, the characters of the collection straddle two cultures and strive to reach a point of union. Mukherjee (2011) claims in the Drexel Interview: “Some of the characters in *The Middleman and Other Stories* are open to America and they feel that it has to be at the expense of origin. ... making oneself over as an American requires a kind of murder of the self, a slaughter of one's self.” However, murdering oneself can seldom ensure a decent identity, as Said (1985) comments, “The Orientals continue to be looked down upon by the “Occidentals” (p. 69).

On the other hand, Jhumpa Lahiri's works also explicate the cross-cultural conflicts, shock, alienation, and consequent predicaments of South Asian immigrants to America. Lahiri, in her works, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), *The Namesake* (2006), *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008), and *The Lowland* (2013), travels through her heterogeneous painful experiences of an Indian woman in an expatriate setting. Her characters constantly fight to get acculturated and to establish a respectful position in the adopted country, but they can never forget their native identity. In *The Namesake*, Ashima Ganguli finds herself trapped between the ancestral culture and the host culture. Consequently, she undergoes a 'trishanku' experience, as she belongs to neither Calcutta nor America. Such dissociation to both her motherland and the host land is, indeed, at the center of diasporic trauma. In fact, the world of diasporic people appears to be a world of dilemma and a world of in betweenness where people in general go through a thrishanku-like existence. They experience a melancholy, a sense of loss and a cultural and emotional emptiness in their attempts to settle and adjust to the new life. However, all these conditions also seem to be the basis of their newly developed identity, (Bhattacharjee 2021, n.p). The novel opens with Ashima busy with making a spicy Bengali snack using American ingredients. The snack becomes "a humble approximation of the snack sold for pennies on Calcutta sidewalks but as usual, there is something missing." (*The Namesake*, p.1). Such a sense of missing is, indeed, a lifelong companion of Ashima, who is seen to miss her people, culture, and country, India, throughout the novel. She has felt out of water since she arrives in Cambridge. While Ashoke, her husband, spends busy time on the university campus, she spends a lonely time in their apartment reading and rereading the same copies of 'Desh', a Bangla magazine, which she brought with her from India. She evades going outside as she cannot cope with American culture. All these things push her to a state of dilemma, resulting in a perpetual sense of nostalgia. Thus, "she is emotionally and spatially dislocated from her real home. Physically, she lives in America, but psychologically, she remains in Kolkata and constantly thinks about her family and wants to join them in India" (*A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri's Novel*, p. 52). Lahiri's parents, the first-generation immigrants, also experienced the same as Lahiri herself observes:

The way my parents explain it to me is that they have spent their immigrant lives feeling as if they are on a river with a foot in two different boats. Each boat wants to pull them in a separate direction, and my parents are always torn between the two. They are always hovering, literally straddling two worlds (A Conversation with Jhumpa Lahiri, n.p.).

Again, while Ashoke and his wife Ashima, the immigrants from the first generations, do not want to get Americanized, their children Gogol and Sonia feel the call to be Americanized. The Indians born in America do not like to be treated as Indians; rather, they want to be known as Americans. Concerning this aspect of their life, Bhatt (2009) writes, when Ashima and Ashoke find peace with the touch of their pasts, Gogol, their son, are found busy “to eradicate his heritage” (p. 44). As a part of his attempt to uproot his past, Gogol even changes his name to Nikhil. However, changing the name does not bring any peace to Gogol’s mind. Rather he finds a new complication as the adopted name appears to him to be “scant, inconsequential” in comparison of the name ‘Gogol’ his previous one (The Namesake, p. 105). Bhatt (2009) thus observes that Gogol fails to cut off his roots and identity entirely. Definitely, he attempts to eradicate his past but he becomes “a stranger to himself” (p. 42). While talking about her own dilemma over her own name and situation in American society, in an interview with Jefry Brown, Lahiri (2008) remarks:

It’s what my world is, and I’ve always been aware that my parents came from Calcutta. I have found myself sort of caught between the world of left behind and still clung to, and the world that surrounded me at school and everywhere else, as soon as I set foot out of the door.

In another interview with Donald Cady, Lahiri (2017) further says,

I will never be able to feel fully American or Indian. I will always see myself in some sort ofin between zone, which I am a little bit of this, a little bit of that, but never anything satisfactorily or fully.

Thus, the question of identity appears to be utterly complicated for the second generation of Indians. They need to adhere to value system and Indian culture at home while in public they are forced to follow the code and conducts practiced in American society (Bhat 2009, p. 43).

Finally, after the expiry of her husband, after the separation with Gogol, and after her only daughter Sonia’s decision to marry Ben, a Jewish-Chinese journalist in Boston, Ashima feels lost and decides to spend a half of the year in America and the rest in India. She becomes puzzled and overwhelmed by a feeling of being dislodged and belonging to nowhere.

Ashima feels lonely suddenly, horribly, permanently alone.... She feels overwhelmed by the thought of the move she is about to make, to the city that was once her home and is now, in its way, foreign.For thirty-three years, she missed her life in India.

Now she will miss her job at the library.... She will miss the country in which she had grown to know and love her husband.
(*The Namesake*, p. 278).

Pal & Chakraborty (2004) defines such a condition of the diaspora community as a predicament and these people apparently belong to everywhere but practically, they belong nowhere. They are just “an unanchored soul” (p. 23).

Lahiri’s short story collection, *Unaccustomed Earth*, explains how Indian immigrants shuttle between American culture and Indian culture, and how they accommodate themselves to unfamiliar people in unfamiliar settings. The stories of the collection also focus the cultural division between the children born and brought up in America and their Bengali parents. Munos (2013) writes that *Unaccustomed Earth*, Lahiri’s second collection of short stories, is the witness to “the generational gap between Bengali-American immigrants and their American born children”. The stories also investigate how second-generation diasporic community form a self of their own by assimilating in the new and resisting their parents’ adherence to the memories of “India, the first-generation homeland” (p. 1).

The stories of this collection mainly illustrate the miserable conditions of the Indian immigrant housewives who long for their own culture, suffer from homesickness, and, in the long run, get frustrated. Most first-generation immigrant Indian women do not have any outside involvement, either as students or professionals, and are thus mostly confined to the four walls of their small apartment, where they spend busy time in cleaning, washing and cooking, and waiting for their husbands or children to come home. Their success depends on the success stories of their children and husbands. However, the reality is that none of these things can provide them with actual satisfaction. Consequently, many of the first-generation housewife immigrants get utterly depressed, become frantic, and start detesting suburban American life. To them, becoming a suburban stay-at-home mother appears to be equal to an unhappy and lonely existence. Gnanamony (2006) rightly observes that “Lahiri’s stories do document the characters’ trauma of cultural displacement and the feeling of cultural nostalgia.” (p. 104).

Interpreter of Maladies, Lahiri’s Pulitzer-winning collection of short stories, attempts to focus on the miscommunication and conflicts prevailing among the intergenerational diaspora community living in the USA. However, such communication gap and clash are experienced mostly by first-generation Indian immigrants and a few second-generation Indian Americans. Shukumar and Shoba from “A Temporary Matter”, Mr. and Mrs. Das from “Interpreter of Maladies”,

Dev from “Sexy”, Mrs. Sen and Mr. Sen from “Mrs. Sen’s”, Sanjeev from “The Blessed House”, the parents from “When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine” are immigrant Bengalis who are living in the USA and are unable to cut off the cord deep-seated in India, despite their tendency to assimilate in their adopted land. On this journey, they often get alienated, get lost in the wilderness, and become just strangers to themselves. The trauma of being culturally dislocated, the agony of being lonely, and the mental torture of being disillusioned with life undergone by the Indian immigrants in the USA are the major questions Jhumpa Lahiri tries to explain in those stories. Thus, *Interpreter of Maladies* talks of immigrant Americans and the clash between the culture they inherited and “the new World that their hyphenated identity causes” (Diwan 2012, p. 2). About the story “Mrs. Sen’s”, in an interview with Vibhuti Pate, Lahiri (1999) comments that the story talks about the lonesomeness, bewilderment and anguish of an immigrated Bengali lady who strives hard “to cope up simultaneously with being foreign and being a wife”. In the story, the conflict over culture takes place on two levels- Mrs. Sen uncompromisingly follows her Bengali culture and never allows any adjustment to American culture; her attitude and love towards Eliot also conflict with those of Eliot’s mother’s because of Indian habits and motherliness which she always carries with her.

5. Conclusion

The characters in Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri’s fictional works appear to be confused about how to integrate into the new culture and setting, while simultaneously fostering an intense passion and longing for their ancestral culture, to which they have an emotional attachment. Thus, the diasporic individuals are, in a sense, in an in-between space.

About such reality, Rushdie (1991), another diaspora writer, says, “Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times that we are between two stools” (p. 227). Bhatt (2009), focusing the point of an immigrant’s belongingness to neither world, says that in between the temptations of home and “those from the new” the immigrant people go through a constant psychological war. They often get perplexed to choose between the old world full of myth and tradition and the new world offering freedom and affluence. Thus, the immigrants always appear to be in a dilemma if they should live in the cocoons of traditional values and belief and avoid the scope of interacting with the majority or they should “break the barriers and get assimilated with the overwhelming new culture” (p. 38). The immigrant community, however, attempts to preserve their traditional values, beliefs and cultural practices while they also start imbibing the social norms, conventions and modes of life of the host country. Still, they cannot fully integrate into it, as

they can seldom forget the immigrant history of their ancestors rather are always identified with this past. Bhabha (1994) sees the diasporic people's such journey from 'home' to 'world' as a scope of dilemma for the diaspora community and he identifies such scattering of people as "gatherings of exiles and emigrants and refugees, gathering on the edge of the foreign cultures, gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafes of the city centers" (p. 139). The immigrants are, indeed, never fully accepted into the mainstream of the land they migrated to; rather, they are often forced to live on the periphery, leading them to a state of dilemma over the questions of their existence.

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