

Cultural Displacement and the Formation of Hybrid Identity in *The Namesake*

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ABSTRACT

The Namesake presents a compelling exploration of diasporic identity and the psychological complexities of migration in a globalized world. This paper examines how Jhumpa Lahiri portrays cultural displacement and generational tension through the experiences of the Ganguli family, particularly Gogol Ganguli's struggle with his name as a marker of fractured identity. The act of naming functions as a powerful metaphor for the conflict between inherited tradition and chosen individuality, revealing the emotional burden of living between cultures. Drawing upon postcolonial theory, especially the concept of hybridity and Homi K. Bhabha's 'Third Space,' the paper argues that identity in the novel is not static but fluid and continually negotiated. While the first-generation immigrants, Ashoke and Ashima, remain anchored in memory and nostalgia for their homeland, the second-generation grapples with alienation and cultural ambiguity in the host nation. Lahiri captures the tension between assimilation and preservation, highlighting the subtle negotiations that shape diasporic subjectivity. Ultimately, the novel suggests that identity formation in diaspora involves reconciliation rather than rejection, as seen in Gogol's eventual acceptance of his name. Through this narrative, Lahiri contributes to broader discourses on migration, belonging, and the evolving nature of identity in transnational spaces.

Keywords: Diaspora, Hybridity, Cultural displacement, Third space, Postcolonial identity.
