Displacing the Nation: Contemporary Literature by and about Immigrants

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RÉSUMÉ

Les nombreux romans d’immigrants récemment parus aux États-Unis (ouvrages de Chang-Rae Lee, Sandra Cisneros, Jhumpa Lahiri, Gish Jen, Bharati Mukherjee, parmi d’autres) représentent des personnages qui semblent non seulement faire l’expérience d’une existence trans-nationale sans cesse fragmentée (ce que Homi Bhabha a appelé “unhomeliness”) mais y trouver un certain réconfort. Le plaisir éprouvé à la liminalité va bien au-delà des personnages et s’étend aussi à la structure et au style de ces romans. Cet article s’intéresse à l’entre-deux de ces romans en tant qu’excroissance de la position socioculturelle imprécise des auteurs et des personnages. Ils apparaissent comme des "autres" racialement et culturellement, et pourtant, à la différence des immigrants antérieurs, ils peuvent se déplacer à leur gré entre les États-Unis et leur pays d’origine. Les réalités vertigineuses que ces romans décrivent délogent l’Amérique "Mainstream" de la centralité présumée qu’elle occupe dans l’expérience de l’immigrant.

Keywords: contemporary American immigrant literature, ethnic literature, vacillation, displacement

The question no longer entails relations of what is global in respect to what is local, or what is transnational and what is national, but above all concerns this sudden ‘temporal commutation’ in whose flickerings disappear not only the difference of inside and outside and the expanse of political territories, but also the ‘before’ and ‘after’ of duration and history, for the sake of a real instant over which, finally, no one has control.

(Paul Virilio, "The Third Interval: A Critical Transition")

In Chang-rae Lee’s A Gesture Life, the narrator, a Japanese man who has established himself as a respected storekeeper in middle-class suburban Massachusetts, reflects upon his odd comfort in a mostly white community: "There is something exemplary to the sensation of near perfect lightness, of being in a place and not being there, which seems of course a chronic condition of my life" (289). Here Doc Hata not only speaks for himself but voices with a certain complacency a postgeographical consciousness that iterates itself in so many of the new immigrant novels being published today. Such spiritual and geographic dislocation is a preoccupation of many

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contemporary theorists. "The sensation ...of being in a place and not being there," in Doc Hata’s words, evokes both Virilio’s "sudden temporal commutation" in the epigraph above, and what Homi Bhabha calls "inbetweenness," or "unhomeliness," that is, "the intervention of the ‘beyond’ that establishes a boundary: a bridge, where ‘presencing’ begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world—the unhomeliness—that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations" (9). Bhabha is uncomfortable with narratives that merely celebrate the "fragmentation of the ‘grand narratives’ of postenlightenment rationalism" and hopes that the unhomely process of "displacement and disjunction" guides postmodernity to a "hybridity of imagined communities" (4-5).

In *Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Fredric Jameson expresses a similar concern with a decentering and estranging "new space": "the new space involves the suppression of distance... [it] involves our insertion as individual subjects into a multidimensional set of radically discontinuous realities" (41). For Jameson, too, this is a dilemma that requires resolution. He envisions cognitive mapping, effectively an intersecting of the personal and the international, as a way to solve the unplaceability of the "new space." In the postmodern vision, these flickerings, as Virilio names them, lead to "a sort of commotion of present duration." Providing no assurances, they distract the individual to a plane of unactable contemplations, provoking a paralyzing unhomeliness. Lee’s immigrant character Doc Hata, on the other hand, perceives the liminality of unhomeliness as "exemplary"; from it he derives a "sense of near perfect lightness." It is a chronic condition of his life to which he is fully accommodated, and because of which he savors the "flickerings" of being in and not in a place. He says appreciatively that "I've actually come to develop an unexpected condition of transparence here," (21) referring in part to the longevity of his tolerated non-native status in middle-class Bedley Run, Massachusetts. "Such," he says, "is the cast of my belonging." We may see such self-accommodation to a vertiginous daily existence as a disturbing revelation—and yet we encounter it repeatedly in these novels. Complacence with discontinuous existence points to a vision of place, nation, and identity that in its cumulative effect (for there are many immigrant novels bearing this meaning today) dislocates America. In the geography of these novels, America decenters. It is levered away from its presumed centrality. It is no longer the hub but a spoke, no longer the logical endpoint of all immigration. While the mainstream seems always to forget this, America is a nation whose myths are perpetually evolving, and perpetually open to evolution. Here again the margin redraws the center. Through this new immigrant literature can be seen the outlines of a revised cognitive map of America, one that conceives what Jameson calls "some (unrepresentable, imaginary) global social totality" (41).

In this essay I propose a tour of the landscape of this new literary immigrant vision of America. The authors are immigrants (or children born to immigrants) who have come to America from India, China, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic, the Philippines, and Korea. They are among the recent arrivals having a social and aesthetic effect on the general population. In 1965, the Hart-Cellar immigration act radically changed the numbers and the national origins for immigrants to America. (Volpp, 261) Forty years later, in 2002, the nations cited above ranked among the top
ten nations providing legal immigrants to America. As varied as these nationalities are, they share a racialized redefinition of immigration to America. What credence can the American myth of the melting pot hold for immigrants of color? As Werner Sollors’s seminal *Beyond Ethnicity* makes clear, the ideal of immigration to America until the middle of the twentieth century was to come to American and become American in language, looks, and mentality—to blend in. While conservative Americans of the early twentieth century doubted that Italians and Jews could ever "look" American, immigrants today from China, Mexico, and India don’t contemplate for a moment whether they could blend in to the established WASP profile of American-ness. In *Lucy*, by Jamaica Kincaid, for example, a West Indian *au pair*, dining in a train with her white employers, observes of Mariah, her employer: "Mariah did not seem to notice what she had in common with the other diners, or what I had in common with the waiters. She acted in her usual way, which was that the world was round and we all agreed on that, when I knew that the world was flat and if I went to the edge I would fall off." Lucy’s experiential knowledge of the racial divide inherent in the twentieth- and twenty-first-century immigrant’s existence is profound and incontrovertible. This knowledge is the foundation for Lucy’s awareness that her participation in America disrupts its presumed space. In their numbers and colors, immigrants now bring a new appearance to being American, a change the mainstream no longer can ignore. Characters in recent American immigrant fiction reflect a growing cognizance that they are changing the place they are inhabiting. To be American now no longer depends on a personal makeover, but a remapping of the cognitive landscape that the immigrants have entered.

In part, the reconceiving of what America looks like begins with the idea of what Americans look like. Assumptions that formed the foundation of the hegemony of whiteness are eroding (albeit gradually); and with them the metanarrative of erasing all physical distinctions to "become" or "melt into" an American. Lucy’s flat-world vision implies all this and more: to white Americans who consider themselves enlightened and liberal, her acknowledgement of racial discrimination is as regressive and as unacceptable as a two-dimensional earth, yet she only confirms what is visibly verified. Cultural uncertainty replaces universalized values. Overlapping diasporas replace the pristine American promised land. And here, too, racial difference is overwritten by the postcolonial heritage and mentality that these immigrants bring with them. Unlike the earlier waves of immigration, these immigrants are all from countries that were either colonized by European powers or were subjected to American imperialism—or both. They now bring their lived postcolonial racial and political awareness to an industrialized power. Thus, when the narrator of Bharati Mukherjee’s *Jasmine* exclaims, "On the streets I saw only more greed, more people like myself. New York was an archipelago of ghettos seething with aliens," her statement is edged with a doubled autoethnographic awareness: to mainstream American ears it is dislocating to hear "alien" and "seething" from the lips of an illegal

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immigrant from Hasnapur, India (140). Readers are forced to question their assumptions. By voicing the perspective that her presence offends, Jasmine appropriates and disallows its centrality. Jasmine and Lucy, like other contemporary immigrant characters, take advantage of their liminality to dislodge mainstream readers from their assumed positions.

The landscape of this new immigrant vision is reinforced by postmodern fluidity that comes from the fluidity of transportation, digital communication, and media transmission, allowing new immigrants to sustain and replenish their cultural identities and their personal connections to their countries of origin, while broadening and rewriting the concept of American identity to include themselves. They live in two worlds: "Nothing was rooted anymore," writes Mukherjee, "Everything was in motion" (152). Chicano/a authors like Sandra Cisneros and Hector Tobar are writing about a world of which Mexico City (not New York or Washington D.C. or Los Angeles) is the heart and center. The Indian characters in Lahiri’s books shuttle physically between Delhi and Massachusetts, and emotionally hover between the two temporal (and psychological) zones. This constant cross-national negotiation is not experienced only by immigrant Americans; in a less dramatic way, many Americans live it. Significantly, through this widely read immigrant literature, an expanded and attenuated vision of America accrues symbolic weight in the consciousness of all Americans. Xenophobes and conservative educators like Samuel Huntington complain that the United States’ national identity is becoming Balkanized by the forces of globalization, and in part, they are right. The imagined map of America is redrawing itself, resituating, decentering, broadening. There is little that conservatives—or anyone—can do to resist the reality behind Hector Tobar’s description of what he calls “this alternative geography:"

I would look at a map of the United States... and see a truncated, incomplete image... At the turn of the millennium, that map was inadequate to convey the shift that had taken place in the psychic geography of the city, the roads and highways people carried in their brains.

In this alternative geography, the great hub at the center of the map... was Mexico City.
(23)

The new immigrant literature announces and encourages this seismic shift; it distinguishes itself from previous paradigms of immigrant narrative voice and vision. This fiction reflects a national myth undergoing transformation, transmuting the national landscape as it develops. The template of the immigrant narrative which has been with us since William Bradford and Hector St. Jean de Crevecouer begins with a journey to the New World, survives shock, resistance, exploitation, and discrimination, eventually experiences assimilation (with its loss of ethnic identity) and usually concludes at some mediated moment of reincorporating both American and ethnic identity. Here we have the narrative tropes that classically offer the greatest satisfaction: accomplished lineal directionality and resolution, or closure. A transatlantic passage in steerage from crowded, worn-down places across vast geographies to a land of pristine expanses and burgeoning promise. Ellis Island,
Chicago, a farm (or factory work) and family in the Midwest. Obstacle overcome, goal achieved, loose ends reincorporated, progeny who blend in visibly and linguistically.

The literature of immigration being written today refuses the linear narrative logic, the closure, the teleological reassurances made to homogeneous America. Cyclical rather than linear, chaotic rather than ordered, the spatial trajectories of these new narratives repeatedly reinscribe a different American landscape, in both physical and psychic terms. This remapping is revealed through the signature touch of contemporary immigrant literature: an acknowledgement of unhomeliness (or flickering, inbetweenness, vacillation) that ranges from resignation to exhilaration, influencing character, mood, even style and structure. Hector Tobar and Junot Diaz (Dominican American), for instance, defiantly remap spatial and linguistic boundaries through their style, mixing in regional Spanish, local references, ghetto slang, and Hispanic word order. In a single paragraph Junot Diaz will cite Salman Rushdie and Tom Waits and his old tia. He switches languages dizzyingly, as in "I won't describe the lio me and the novia got into over that letter," transporting the reader between linguistically distant locations that exceed the reader's competence (77). The America that Diaz's narrators display to the reader is the place where Spanish, street language, and literate English all coexist.

In some novels, the process of a character's arrival at this competency drives the narrative, but in many, the characters' recognition that their worlds exceed geographical determination forms the background to the events that occur. In other novels, this recognition has a structural presence, affecting not the characters so much as the shape of the novel.

Within this physical landscape, the characters in this fiction endlessly construct and reconstruct themselves—the process of redrawing the boundaries of the self accompanies the many geographical moves. "Independence, self-reliance: I learned the litany by heart," muses the main character of Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine, "but I felt suspended between worlds... Jyoti, Jasmine: I shuttled between identities" (77). After spending a year in the U.S., Kincaid's Lucy proclaims, "I understood that I was inventing myself ... and that I was doing this more in the way of a painter than in the way of a scientist. I could not count on precision or calculation; I could only count on intuition. I did not have anything in mind, but when the picture was complete I would know" (134). For each of these characters, self-fashioning is emotional, unsettled, and though self-aware, it is uncalculated. Jasmine's identity proves to be suspended between her selves. Indeed, by the end of the novel she feels herself cycling through Jasmine, Jyoti, Jazz, and Jane: "Time will tell if I am a tornado, rubble maker, arising from nowhere and disappearing into a cloud" (241). In admitting that she "understood" that she was inventing herself, Lucy suggests a distance from her self-fashioning persona that belies her conscious involvement. They pursue change even while they have surrendered themselves to it.

What Dean Franco says of Chicana/o literature and culture applies as well to all contemporary immigrant literature—that it is "anticolonial, revolutionary, mixed, and born out of fragments and the desire for human agency" (378). Consider the main character of The Namesake, written by Jhumpa Lahiri: His name is Gogol Ganguli by default. In Bengali custom, the child must be named by the grandmother, but when
Gogol’s great grandmother in India mails the letter that bears the boy’s name, the letter never arrives, and she dies soon after. Forever, then, Gogol’s good Bengali name remains suspended in inbetweenness, while his parents wait with annually decreasing confidence that this facet of their son will be revealed. The boy grows up with only his personal, family pet name, "Gogol." His father, who once survived a train wreck thanks to a volume of Nikolai Gogol’s short stories, has acknowledged this debt by naming his son "Gogol." In the narrative twists of the story of Gogol Ganguli’s name, Lahiri makes sly gestures to Nikolai Gogol’s literary technique, the parallel between the father Ashoke Ganguli’s small middle-class existence and the lives of Gogol’s Russian characters, even perhaps the fact that Nikolai Gogol’s grandfather changed the family name to Gogol from Ianovskii.

But while the reader savors these added resonances, Gogol never even learns why the name is significant to his father; as he grows up, his name is increasingly problematic to him. He first insists on making Gogol his formal name, but then he hates it. When he finally changes it legally to a more typical Bengali name, he feels that he’s not entirely himself with either name, and admits that he feels like "he’s ... acting the part of twins." The code-switching embodied in his names and highlighted by the shadow of the literary Gogol is emblematic of the interwoven flux in the immigrant existence of the entire Ganguli family.

After his father’s sudden and meaningless death Gogol muses that "In so many ways, his family’s life feels like a string of accidents, unforeseen, unintended, one incident begetting another... Things that should never have happened, that seemed out of place and wrong, these were what prevailed, what endured, in the end" (287). This open-eyed, unemotional accounting of his life leads him to a growing acceptance that his life in this country will be marked with the arbitrary. Gogol remembers a winter walk on the tip of Cape Cod with his father when Gogol was young. Having left mother and sister far behind, he follows his father along a long crescent sandbar until they reach the lighthouse, only to realize they had forgotten the camera and the tide is rising. His father exhorts Gogol, therefore, to "Try to remember it always," explaining, "Remember that you and I made this journey, that we went together to a place where there was nowhere left to go" (187). Gogol meditates on this message from his father, incorporating it into his personal mythology of himself and his family. In this memory his father laughingly enjoys the symbolism of their strandedness. It takes the entire novel for Gogol to grow into a similar acceptance of being somewhere because there is "nowhere else to go," that is, his arbitrary coexistence in two overlapping cultures. It is more than a tolerance for indeterminacy; Ashoke Ganguli in his life and death exemplifies an appreciation for his own externally absurd-seeming but nonetheless deeply felt life. The book ends as Gogol finally begins to read the very book which, "until moments ago... was destined to disappear from his life altogether, but he has salvaged it by chance, as his father was pulled from a crushed train forty years ago"(290-1).

Characters in Lahiri’s fiction display a bemused appreciation of liminality. This becomes a stage of accomplishment in itself, whether in the construction of a character’s identity across continents, as with Gogol Ganguli, or in the retention of self when stretched thin across leagues of flux as in Lahiri’s short story, "The Third and
Final Continent." The speaker, an Indian man who has come to the U.S. and raised his family here, muses:

"While the astronauts, heroes forever, spent mere hours on the moon, I have remained in this new world for nearly thirty years. I know that my achievement is quite ordinary. I am not the only man to seek his fortune far from home, and certainly I am not the first. Still, there are times I am bewildered by each mile I have traveled, each meal I have eaten, each person I have known, each room in which I have slept. As ordinary as it all appears, there are times when it is beyond my imagination." (198)

Behind the self-satisfaction that the speaker reveals in having retained agency throughout his odyssey is the whimsically self-satirizing analogy to astronauts on the moon. Even though it is his physical home, America is to him still nearly as radically alien as a lunar landscape. In *I, the Divine*, by Rabih Alameddine, structure itself replicates the permanent state of inbetweenness of the contemporary immigrant. The book is a series of first chapters of a fictional Lebanese immigrant's autobiography. Over and over she attempts to write her life; each attempt is different, weaving in new material, but Sarah al-Nour, the main character, never proceeds beyond chapter one. These successive first chapters reconstruct the inbetweenness of Sarah's real life, reflecting the spatial back and forth of her relocations from Beirut to New York, California, and Beirut again. The narrator stops and starts, vacillating spatially across the pages of her journal, always shuttling back to page one. Alameddine's protagonist is, in such a treatment, a hypertext version of the woman we know she is. For Sarah, "the excess of possible trajectories means that you cannot quite be sure of where you are going, just as you may never be sure of where you have been" (Harpold, 193). Here immigrant indeterminacy expresses itself in part by denying the continuity of time and space; it is the structure of the narrative more than Sarah herself that depicts this consciousness.

*Mona in the Promised Land*, by Gish Jen, presents a character who intentionally constructs for herself a positive consciousness out of indeterminacies. A second-generation Chinese-American immigrant and precocious teenager, Mona pursues and cultivates this inbetweenness. Mona's self-knowledge is incubated through a series of childish identity confusions: If she is a Chinese living in America, can she somehow become a Japanese, so that she can marry the Japanese boy she has a crush on? But soon Mona embraces and revels in her overlapped and overdetermined subject position, converting to Judaism, inflecting her speech with Yiddish terminology and word order. Her polygot teenage New York language scampers across the surface of several linguistic codes, drawing nuance from each but not grounded in any. Her language and her experience validate the recurrent mobility of these novels. Unlike the mobility of traditional immigrant literature—from old country to new world—Mona's mobility is circular, cyclical, contradictory, incomplete. In her life it plays a role that is more symbolic than real. In the center of the book, Mona briefly attempts to run away from her parents' home in suburban "Scarshill," New York. She arrives in Grand Central Station and imagines it as a church or temple:
She feels, quite unexpectedly, as if she stands in the Garden of Eden. Just for a moment. The wind of apprehension, as always, will blow. But between gusts, she feels it—not even that she is standing in, but as though she is herself the Garden of Eden. ...She feels as though she stands at the pointy start of time. Behind her, no history. Before her—everything. How arrogant! As if you have no mother! As if you come out of thin air! She can hear Helen’s voice. Still Mona feels it—something opening within herself, big as the train station, streaming with sappy light. (255)

Grand Central Station, great terminus of American mobility, place of departures and arrivals, is a conducive background for Mona’s epiphany. In this temple of transience, "like a charged, curved space between the hands of a god." Mona’s self grows to the proportion of a place with mythic infinite potential for beginning anew, the enclosed and promising garden of Eden. Mona’s interior monologue sounds the numerous registers of her self within that space. She envisions her Eden in a voice that is appropriately Whitmanesque: "Behind her, no history. Before her—everything." Unlike Mona’s usual voice, that of a once dutiful and responsible but now rebellious Asian teen, this voice celebrates indeterminate potential, echoing Whitman’s famous embarkation, "The Open Road":

Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road,  
Healthy, free, the world before me,  
The long brown path before me, leading wherever I choose. (297)

At this moment Mona, too, experiences and expresses a deliciously American cultural promise of total self-reinvention through an open-ended pilgrimage. Invading the temple-cum-garden of Eden is not a snake, but the Asian mother Helen’s voice, attempting to negate Mona’s divestiture of the past. Her mother’s strained sentence structure, accent, and tone can be heard in that "As if you had no mother!" bearing the heavy weight of Chinese insistence on family and tradition. While the maternal voice does not succeed in casting Mona into self-doubt, Mona’s very twentieth-century teenage consciousness closes the epiphany with reality. Her heart has thrilled to the moment, and yet her inherent cynical humor knows the light is stage-managed, perhaps even a pop culture orchestration—it’s "sappy." Mona crosses a threshold into the bright light of future possibilities but even in that moment she realizes she is in three worlds at once: her romantic vision of taking to the road, her cynical American teenager perspective, and her inherited traditional Chinese mindset. She is everywhere and nowhere as she stands in Grand Central Station, and that is the real source of her epiphany. At that moment, a homeless woman falls asleep partly in her lap. Mona sets aside her inculcated middle-class Asian-American tendencies and "takes the lady in," absorbing her as her own, holding her so that she doesn’t fall off the bench. It is a simultaneously ridiculous and touching scene that hints at Mona’s incipient realization of how she, not unlike Whitman, can contain as many people as she encounters. In fact, she feels "as though she herself is the Garden of Eden"; it is within her that she feels "something opening, big as the train station." She has become a location that accommodates all points of vacillation. A single, linear narrative cannot contain her.
Why, then, do these immigrant characters inhabit their vacillating positions and these novels structurally reproduce circular commutation? The point here is not the truism that immigrant fiction reflects the insecurity of immigrant lives. These authors, rather, present characters who are accommodating and cultivating the inbetweenness they encounter. They do not seek to rationalize or rectify it so much as to claim it as a real state, to inhabit it competently as Virilio’s "the real instant." They seem to be aware of what Trinh Minh-Ha explains when she says that "authenticity, as a need to rely on an ‘undisputed origin,’ is prey to an obsessive fear: that of losing a connection." What distinguishes the characters in this immigrant fiction is their capacity to step beyond what Min-Ha identifies as a "craving for a logic of being" which "cannot help but loathe the threats of interruptions, disseminations, and suspensions" (649). Gogol Ganguli, Doc Hata, Sarah al-Nour, and other immigrant characters who successfully cope in twenty-first century American settings, do not seek to resolve or deny the indeterminacy of their existences. Rather, they make their homes in the "interruptions, disseminations, and suspensions."

Just as the location of America has shifted out of centrality, the well-rehearsed theme of mobility has metamorphosed into a discontinuity that determines the structure of many of these novels. Like the vacillation that Homi Bhabha writes about, the movement of the characters is not linear and has no destination. It is circular, zigzag. Many feel nomadic. All reject the established borders and frontiers between and within America and embrace instead the intermediate, indeterminate space between cultures.

Unsettledness fails to alienate; instead, it provides a vitality that seeds confidence. Theirs is a confidence in the unsettledness, a confidence in their ability to navigate and survive it. Fragmentation and discontinuous reality produce a paradoxical sense of possibility. These authors and their characters reinscribe an indeterminate international space on the surface of America and American culture. As Lala in Sandra Cisneros’ Caramelo comes to realize, the rebozo, her symbol of connectedness, also represents the endless and confusing shifts in Lala’s life and that of her family between Mexican and North American cities: "lives intertwine, coincidences collide, seemingly random happenings are laced with knots, figure eights and double loops, designs more intricate than the fringe of a silk rebozo" (428-9) she discovers. From the afterlife Lala’s dead grandmother begs Lala to help her cross over "like a coyote" out of limbo, where she says "it’s so lonely being like this, neither dead nor alive, but somewhere halfway, like an elevator between floors" (408). The grandmother’s limbo underscores the Reyes family’s living limbo, "that terrible ache and nostalgia for home when home is gone" (380). By the end of the novel Lala has incorporated this dislocation, finding a way to live happily, productively, in her and her family’s limbo, "all bound together... in a country I invented. Like all emigrants caught between here and there" (434).

These are the books currently being written, being published, and being read. The image they project is the image to which Americans are adapting their self-consciousness. Even as American readers are more receptive to "multiethnic" literature, they have become more open to the idea of inbetweenness, the "estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world" (Bhabha 6). In 1995, when Bhabha wrote the introduction to Location of Culture, he asked "How are subjects formed ‘in-
between"? How do strategies of representation or empowerment come to be formulated in communities where the exchange of values, meanings, and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical?" Only ten years later, after the fallout of September 11, after a second war in Iraq, and in the face of increased suspicion and intolerance toward immigrants, I believe we are nonetheless nearing a moment when the answer suggests itself. It should not be surprising that the answer comes in the form of the very concern that Bhabha expressed in Location of Culture: a celebration of the fragmentation. This literature offers the cultural consciousness of the United States a vision of immigrant writers leading toward a transnational acceptance of inbetweenness, of freedom that frightens, that makes no promise except that existence cannot be predictable, that home is carried within, that nostalgia is hardwired, that meaning adheres as well within the fragmented narrative, that America exists as one point in the grid that constitutes their consciousnesses—through a process of displacement and disjunction that does not totalize experience.

Bibliography