

DIASPORA SPACE IN ALICE PUNG'S *GROWING UP ASIAN IN AUSTRALIA*

Mega Rahmadani

English Literature, Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Surabaya
megarahmadani@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Pratiwi Retnaningdyah, Ph.D

English Literature, Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Surabaya
pratiwiretnaningdyah@unesa.ac.id

Abstrak

Di era ini banyak orang di seluruh dunia melakukan gerakan yang disebut sebagai Diaspora. Diaspora adalah perpindahan, migrasi, atau hamburan orang yang jauh dari tanah air asal atau leluhur. Selama tinggal di luar negeri, orang biasanya jauh dari kelahiran mereka seperti di negara asal. Dalam mempertahankan keaslian, orang-orang diasporia menunjukkan ruang diaspora mereka sebagai kunci untuk memiliki kehidupan seperti penduduk asli. Ruang Diaspora adalah situs di mana penduduk asli diasporia sebanyak diasporia adalah penduduk asli. Buku antologi berjudul *Growing up Asian in Australia* memberikan banyak kisah yang berhubungan dengan kehidupan diasporia melalui perjuangan menjadi imigran. Penelitian ini menekankan pada dua masalah (1) bagaimana ruang diaspora digambarkan dalam cerita dan (2) bagaimana ruang diaspora membentuk identitas budaya karakter.

Penelitian ini menggunakan teori identitas sosial oleh Samovar dalam menganalisis data untuk menjawab pernyataan masalah. Data adalah kutipan dari cerita yang terkait dengan masalah, dan sumber data adalah buku *Growing Up Asian in Australia* karya Alice Pung. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif karena menggunakan penelitian kepustakaan sebagai teknik analisis. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa ruang diaspora ada di antara karakter melalui aktivitas mereka. Kemudian ditemukan bahwa ruang diaspora memegang kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap pengembangan identitas.

Kata kunci: *Diaspora, Ruang Diaspora, Identitas Budaya, Budaya Asli, Asia*

Abstract

In this era lots of people around the world doing movement that is called as Diaspora. Diaspora is the movement, migration, or scattering of a people away from an established or ancestral homeland. In living abroad, people are usually away from their nativity just like in the native country. In maintaining the nativeness, the diasporian people showing their diaspora space as the key to have life like native. Diaspora space is a site where the native is as much a diasporian as the diasporian is the native. The anthology book entitled *Growing up Asian in Australia* gives lot of stories that related into the diasporian life through the struggling of being immigrant. This research emphasizes into two problems (1) how is diaspora space depicted in the story and (2) how does diaspora space shape the characters' cultural identity.

The research used social identity theory by Samovar in analysing the data to answer the statement of the problems. The data is the quotation from the story that related into the problem, and the source of the data is *Growing up Asian in Australia* book by Alice Pung. This research is qualitative research since using library research as the technique of analysis. The result shows that diaspora space does exists among the characters through their activities and later it is found that diaspora space holds significant contribution towards identity development.

Keywords : *Diaspora, Diaspora Space, Cultural Identity, Native Culture, Asian*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Diaspora is the movement, migration, or scattering of a people away from an established or ancestral homeland, means that they live in a new area and it must bring them new experiences of life especially in culture and behavior (webster). In living abroad some people must be concern with their native culture and life style as they usually do in their real country such as tradition. This case makes them still do the law in despite of they live in a new society, and this is called as diaspora space. Brah (1996) defines that diaspora space is the site where the native is as much a diasporian as the diasporian is the native.

The concept of diaspora space references the global condition of 'culture as a site of travel', which seriously problematises the subject position of the 'native'. Diaspora space is the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, of 'us' and 'them' are contested (Clifford 1992).

The definition above shows that diaspora space is a thing to maintain between native and influenced culture are stay alive each other that placed by its needed. It is also a prevention in facing the fading of native identity, in anticipating the that, diasporical people show their culture and even applied in their daily life in order to keep it as their culture wherever they live.

Some researchers also take a look into this topic from many other perspectives but still it has gap with this study. Xie in 2005 has done in researching about similar topic about diaspora space. The study talks about the deterritorialization in the era of globalization calls the traditional notion of "community" into question. Being placed in the other side of world such western, the new Chinese Diaspora are gathering in the virtual communities to get news, to take opinion on issues, and to negotiate their native identities in an alien culture. Meanwhile Sinead Wall (2015) in his study uses a framework of Avtar Brah's notion of diaspora space, it analyses the companionship of narratives that Bulfin produces for The Southern Cross and how his migration experience and identity is translated from one geographical location into another in addition to become part of the material culture which underpins this experience. Contrary to Gixti (2006) in the study of Linguistic and also cultural identity about Maltese youth in some parts in Australia; examines how cultural identity can be reclarified in linguistic of complex and performance relation to transcultural experiences

The point of the study is to discuss about how diaspora space exists and shapes the cultural identity in the anthology book by Alice Pung. Related to the topics, diaspora space can be researched in this study by using the anthology book of Alice Pung entitled *Growing Up Asian in Australia*. In this book there are lot of stories that contain different cultural background from several countries and cultures such as India, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc. The book tells lot of stories from diasporical (Asian-Australian) people who live there since their childhood and how they are treated as minority there. Being minority in a big country like Australia is really a concern because it can affect on how they will have their life style in the future. By reading this book people will know how they live there (in description) with their minority label and they can imagine how to live in another country (overseas) with lots of different culture exist there. That is gaining a new perspective about living abroad and it can be said as a new thing to be experienced.

The book is entitled edited by Alice Pung, since she acts as the editor author. Alice Pung is an Australian writer, editor and lawyer. Her books include the memoirs *Unpolished Gem* (2006), *Her Father's Daughter* (2011) and the novel *Laurinda* (2014). Pung is practising solicitor. She has also worked as an art instructor, independent school teacher at primary and secondary schools and is Artist in Residence at Janet Clarke Hall at the University of Melbourne. Her first book, *Unpolished Gem*, received the Australian Book Industry's newcomer of the Year Award and was shortlisted for the new South Wales Premoer's Literary Awards, the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, the Age Book of the Year Award and the Booksellers' Choice Awards. Pung attended the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa as a Resident in 2009.

This great anthology book is chosen as the object of the study because it represents diaspora space and cultural identity. It can be seen from the title itself, how Asian people living in Australia which is big country with its characteristics. Australia is a country with majority of white people but how can Asian live there with their identity and native culture as well; this brings the writer into the topic as the study to discuss. This topic is rarely analyzed in this book so that is why the researcher chose the topic to analyze using diaspora space and cultural identity theory.

DIASPORA SPACE

A. The Definition of Diaspora Space

Diaspora can be defined as a number of people who transfer from one native country to other countries, or the act of spreading. The case of diaspora mostly found in nowadays because lots of people do immigration or mobileness across the world such America or Australia.

Currently, the most generally accepted definitions resemble those of Robin Cohen's (1992) statement that diaspora is categorizing all communities to live out of their original place. Such a statement is mostly used in a non-theoretical, or at most in obscure theoretical way. Used in this way, this term includes such various groups as migrants, alienation, evacuee and transnational ethnic minorities or in short it can be said as all of people who live outside the first land. (Kokot & Alfonso, 2004)

The concept of diaspora space references the global condition of 'culture as a site of travel' (Clifford 1992) which seriously problematises the subject position of the 'native'. Diaspora space is the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, of 'us' and 'them' are contested. Brah argues that diaspora space is a conceptual category is 'inhabited', not only by those who have migrated and their descendant, but equally by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous. In other words, the concept of diaspora space (as opposed to that of diaspora) includes the entanglement, the intertwining of the genealogies of dispersion with those 'staying put'. The diaspora space is the site where the native is as much a diasporian as the diasporian is the native (Brah, 1996).

B. Diaspora Space as Third Space

In pointing the division of Diaspora Space by Avtar Brah, Bhabha suggests the use of Private and Public space as the key in determining the diaspora space as the third space of a hybrid individuals that indicates the division of the two spaces exist.

Third space theory is a postcolonial sociolinguistics theory of identity and community realized through language or education. The theory explains about the uniqueness of each person, actor or context as a "hybrid". It can be described as imaginary space, both mental and physical. Hybridity is the possibility for the colonizer and the colonized people to encounter in a space. It is not just about the physical but also mental condition which is

bounded by Bhabha. Hybridity it is not a simple theory such botanical term that explain a condition of two kind *specimens* crossing to each other and it results (re)creation of new *specimen*. The word re becomes concern, it means that the crossed one is already created from other collected crossing, means everything cannot be said as creatures are naturally created and it is from a sole creation. Bhabha uses any totalizing patterns which clarify human has sole identity. At this point, he connects the pattern straightly with multiculturalism that tries to join, to bond, to fuse, or even to repair distinctive cultures to harmonious wholes in unity. However this ground bring to the fact that those distinctive cultures do not appear in the pre-condition, but it is more presents as an effect of historical alteration, modification, transformation, or revolution, specifically of colonialism and post-colonialism and it is implied by the point of conflict or crisis. It means that the term that Bhabha assumes is only appear in colonialism and post-colonialism. Without this condition, multiculturalism seems to be hard to be proved. Thus, contemporary age people will be so hard to be claimed to have the sole authentic culture. In simpler, cultural hybridity is not something completely general. Bhabha's notion of hybridity is linked with mimicry because it deceives and resist with no awareness. It must be seen as a vital refusal where the cultures have already there and becomes hybrid automatically. The encounter does not only make space but it also determines the subjects (the colonized and the colonizer) for what they will get.

C. Social Identity

Identity is multifaceted, abstract concept that has an important role in daily communicative interactions and especially in intercultural communication. Even globalization is exist and it gives significant impacts to the complexity of cultural identities by giving number of the increase of mixed cultures through some activities like mixed marriage, immigration, national adaptation and all kinds of opportunities activities that can give the same effects such as the interaction between some different cultures. (samovar, 2012 : 213)

In *Communication Between Cultures*, (Samovar et al., 2012) divides social identity into several types of identities which are being termed in racial, ethnic, gender, national, regional, organizational, and personal identity.

D. Minority Identity Development

There are four stages to help explain about developing minority identity. Unexamined Identity

as the first stage draws that in this stage, individuals are ignored with the identity issues or even unconcerned with it. They seem like do not have any interest in their own culture. The second stage called as conformity, explains that minority people take lot of efforts to be fitted in with the culture and maybe hold negative self images. Resistance and Separatism as the stage three gives one step of development in which the individuals already feel the awakening of cultural awareness and even stimulates to the greater interest on it, but at the same time it may can be negative since there is also appear the rejection of some cultural aspects (it may be occur). The final stage labelled as integration, this stage as the last development of an individual since they feel the sense of pride in about their own native culture and even showing an act of acceptance to another culture. (Nakayama, 2012)

METHOD

In writing this study, the researcher employs the descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative is a type of research which result the descriptive data in the form of observation people or behavior.

Data and Data Source

The main object of the study is *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters which is published in 2005. The data taken from this novel involves phrases and direct or indirect quotations.

Data Collection

The data collected will be managed using qualitative system due to the absence of numbering sample data served in this study. The data is presented in the form of sentences represented through statement, paraphrase, or quotation.

Procedure of Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study will be classified according to the statement of the problem. In conducting the study, the writer uses the technique in collecting the data as follows: First close reading is done on the novel, this stage aims to comprehend what occurs inside the novel and find the necessary data.

Second, taking notes from some points such as Underlying the important dialogues, action, and narration which are related to the study in the novel as the following actions of the close reading. The aims of this step is to capture several points needed to be revealed.

Then, arranging the data into several part based on its classification, and selecting the data by rejecting the irrelevant information which does not support the topic of the study. The last step is drawing the conclusion of the analysis that has already done in the former chapter and formulating its pedagogical suggestion.

A. ANALYSIS

This chapter aims to answer the statement of the problems that had state in the first chapter. It

consists of data analysis that found in anthology book edited by Alice Pung *Growing Up Asian in Australia* published in 2008. This book is written by "Asian-Australian" authors that contain about short stories, autobiographies, poetry, and comics where give focus into the childhood and the coming-of-age in modern day in Australia. The problems that being the focus on this study is about culture, identity, and diaspora space. The first statement of the problems is how is diaspora space depicted in Alice Pung's *Growing up Asian in Australia*, and the second or the last one is how does diaspora space shapes the character's cultural identity in the book of Alice Pung.

1. Diaspora Space Reflected in Characters' Social and Cultural Life

In identifying diaspora space the term private and public space are used as the element to analyse. Private space deals with family and home that later divided into several points such as presence of food, physical appearance, and giving name. In the other hand, public space reflects with the thinking pattern of Asian, yet it gives effects to the way asian diasporian act in their daily life including into how they make decisions.

a. Private space

1. Presence of food

Food can also be the identity of people, by eating it everyday at home (eventhough they are living abroad) it will make them feel like in their own home in their native country. It is because they keep the tradition to maintain their nativeness. This is in analogously with the term of ethnic identity that explain about the cultural matters which is food also can be concluded as the tradition from the native country (Samovar et al., 2012) It is one of the way to show that they still belong to their original country like in the quotation below

"He spoke of how all his family ate were rissoles, steak and baked potatoes. I looked at him with envy, wishing my mother could cook such things. She treated him like her long lost Aussie son, hand feeding him and stroking him across his blond flat top. 'you are a very nice boy, Darrel,' she would say while patting him on the head. 'Not like my son, who never eats his vegetable curry.'" (Pung, 2008 p. 97)

From the statement above it can be seen that the family still be indian in that way, 'wishing my mother could cook such things' means that his family seems never do cooking meals outside of indian food especially the vegetable curry, since in the story it is told that his

parents are vegetarian so it must be no meat and such things. The parents even introduce the food into their children's friend by doing handfeeding to Darrel like stated above in the data, in this case also showing how the affection of an indian mom (which asian mom) to her son or daughter by giving them meals in everyday. It is kind of the behavior of asian mom who always taking care of her children well.

2. Physical appearance

This issue can also be found in Alice Pung's *Growing Up Asian in Australia*, where an indian boy being body shamed because he has dark skin.

Naturally, growing up, I didn't want to be a nigger, a coon, a darkie. I didn't feel 'black' anything. I just wanted to fit in. (Pung, 2008 p. 10)

From the data above it can be said that physical appearance really matters, but Sunil (the character) himself does not want it happen to him. He just wants to be normal like other people in order to be same with australian. He even tried to do some treatment for himself to get bright skin so that he will not be insulted anymore. That idea comes from his school friends (another children in the playground).

"Why dontcha wash the black off, ya dirty black bastard?" playground wits would yell. And sometimes their parents too, although always with an affectionate chuckle. 'Perhaps if you wash hard enough, it'll come off?' (Pung, 2008 p.10)

Body shamed people sometimes (mostly) being not confident with the way they are. They try to do anything to make their appearance look better. Just like character Sunil, he tried to make his skin color changed into the brighter one just like aussie people but it did not give him any good.

3. Giving name

It is also happened to an Indian family who lived in Australia, as diasporian the family keep using their native identity as the representation of maintaining their culture.

"But the one thing that always got under my skin was my own name. Sunil. My mother and Indian relatives pronounce it 'Soo-neel'; my own broad accent makes it 'Sir-Neil.' (Pung, 2008 p. 9)

His name is Sunil Badami, it is given from his mother who wants to have the name for her first son. Badami is the family name, while sunil in his mother's point of view is a beautiful name and has deep meaning. But sunil does not like it since his

brother was actually sumant but then became monty and sounded like western name.

b. Public Space

The thinking pattern of asian people may infects the way how the asian parents give rule and educate their children. The following data depicts how an asian mother try to create her daughter's life.

"Like many Asian parents, my mum bought me a piano when I was three years old. So from early on in life, I was a performer. I danced, sang and acted in primary school. My mum was proud of me." (Pung, 2008 p. 287)

It is Diana Nguyen's (an Australian-Vietnamese girl) experience in *Five Ways to Disappoint Your Vietnamese Mother's* story with her mother who tries to make her daughter to be clever in another thing outside academic matter by facilitating her with all the chance and opportunities such piano, letting her daughter to dance and sing. It is just like common asian mother that think it just as for hobby in the childhood moments. But it is not for Diana, she likes being performer and keeps doing the performing activities until she is in young age.

This kind of principle (thinking pattern or idea) also influences on how the asian parents take hand in choosing school for their children.

"When I was in Year 7 my mother forced me to go to Vietnamese school for the first time. After coming back from a three-month family trip to Vietnam, she realised she had better send her eldest daughter to Vietnamese school." (Pung, 2008 p. 289)

As stated in the data above it shows that the daughter has to learn their native language by the idea of her mother. The mother wants to keep their nativeness toward her children by send the daughter to Vietnamese school. The act of what the mother can be categorized as public space of diaspora since the choosing of school (which is grouped as public school) using the mind of Asian people. It means that the diaspora space in public space happened to this family.

2. Diaspora Space transforms The Cultural Identity of Individuals

There are four stages involved in shaping the characters' cultural identity such as below,

a. Unexamined Identity

The term of unexamined identity evidence can be found in the story of Tanveer Ahmed in *Exotic Rissolo*. Bangladeshi and Indian are little bit the same in some things for instance meals, such as vegetable curry. This food can be signed as the symbol of nativeness in the story, but Tanveer seems like does not like the dish and tend to feel embarrassed for having it as his daily food.

"I thought my parents were annoying too and I was embarrassed that my house always smelt like curry." (Pung, 2008 p. 97)

The way he thinking of his parents and his house condition indicates the lack of interestness in admitting his native culture. Pointing from the two stories above, it is obviously seen that they (the two characters) have similarity about their case of unexamined identity where they do not have enthusiastic about their own culture. In short it can be said that this stage does exist in the diasporian individual, even in the different cultures and family, the similarity brings them into the same category in term of unexamined identity matter.

b. Conformity

This phase gets the individuals thought about their nativeness, such as efforting to get knowing about their own culture in small scale. This means that they try to fit in with the culture by doing some activities related to their culture or agree about something related to their ethnicity just like the real native.

"At home, I was Sunil, trying not to eat my dhal with my left hand, trying to get my mouth around tongue-twisting Venkateshwara bhajans at morning puja. In the real world, in the brilliant universe of my imagination, I was Neil. I fitted in." (Pung, 2008 p. 12)

The data above shows the act of conformity stage, since the character (Sunil) tries to do some habits like the native of Indian by eating with left hand, morning puja etc. It is just to be fitted in with the family especially his mother who always reminds him about their native culture. Eventhough he does changing his name in the public area, but still he obeys the tradition and tries to do the other nativeness activity, even "comes back" into his real name as the act of the way conforming himself as an Indian.

c. Resistance and Separatism

The third stage of individual minority development is resistance and separatism. In this phase, individuals tend to have greater interest for knowing the ethnic identity of the native culture. Not only that, at the same time the feeling of rejection to the culture comes whether in selected culture or even in all the terms of the culture (the ethnicity) (Nakayama, 2012). This may leads the individuals getting wild in facing the native culture and tend to against their nativeness by doing something or activities that contrast with their root (original habit based on their culture).

"If I couldn't be less black, surely I could get a name that made me feel less black? If Sumant was Monty, why couldn't I be – well, Neil? Neil. I liked it: it sounded like an astronaut's name. It sounded grown-up." (Pung, 2008 p. 12)

Based on the data above rather than showing the greater interest to the own culture, the individual on the contrary showing his contrastness into the native culture of himself. The situation makes Sunil does not want to admit his real name in public because he feels ashamed to have that name because he thinks it is too Indian. Therefore he wants to change his name into modern one like his brother Monty. Then he practices to apply it in public and nobody is like insulting his name anymore and no one wondering about it. This kind of act can be categorized as the resistance of the culture (own culture), and of course it does not match with the native culture where name should be kept as the identity of a person or individual. Later it is known by the mother and they both become in a separatism because

they both have different thought about this matter.

"When we got home, my mother sent Monty out to play, then sat me down in the kitchen. 'What is this?' she said, handing me a bowl of curds and sugar that somehow didn't taste quite as sweet as usual. 'Changing your name? Being a Neil?' She spat my unreal new name out like something bitter and stringy, too difficult to swallow. 'It's just that – I – um, I hate it. Sunil. It's too hard to say. It's too – it's too Indian!'" (Pung, 2008 p. 13)

This mother and son have different opinion about name, the mother thinks that it is the best name for her son, meanwhile the son can not stand with the name. this *separatism* phase leads them to have contrast opinion grows up between them and it makes the mother feels sad for knowing it.

d. Integration

The fourth or the last stage is integration, this stage leads the individuals into the final step in developing identity in minority term. In this phase the individuals find the sense of pride in about their own culture and showing the acceptance to other culture (Nakayama, 2012).

"I didn't worry so much about my name anymore. No matter how people said it, I didn't wince: I knew what it meant. And when someone kindly said, 'SUN-el, that's an interesting name! What's that mean, then?' I'd usually proudly oblige" (Pung, 2008 p. 14)

The way sunil accepts the fact of what the meaning behind his name gaining the feeling of pride in himself. He does not matter about the name anymore because he knows from his mother that it contains beautiful meaning and still gets him feeling of proudness about his Indian atmosphere. This situation makes him admits (in his mind) the truth of his cultural identity which name can give that big changing into his life especially in the way of him thinking and seeing through his culture. In the end of the story he admits that he is proud for knowing who he is by understanding the meaning of that name.

Similarly with Tanveer Ahmed in *Exotic Rissolo*, in the end of the story, the Bangladeshi mother shows her acceptance to other culture by learning and try to do something related to the other culture.

"After gentle urging on my part, my mother taught herself how to cook rissoles, although she would mix pieces of chilli and turmeric paste into them. (Pung, 2008 p. 100)"

From the data above it can be seen that the mother tries to make rissoles, which is usually made by his son's Aussie friend Daryl. By doing that, it demonstrates the acceptance of a Bangladeshi family into the Australian culture, even though the mother still put the native seasoning and recipe into the dish. But it still deals with the term of acceptance and demonstrate in frame of integration toward the culture both the native and the other culture. Identity development, then, becomes a process of familial influences, cultural socialization, and personal experiences by presenting these four stages as the step in shaping characters' cultural identity (Nakayama, 2012).

CONCLUSION

After analysing in the previous chapter, the writer gets the result of the research. Here are several things that can be said as the conclusion of the research. Diaspora Space does exist in the anthology book of Alice Pung entitled *Growing Up Asian in Australia*, it can be seen from the description of the characters as it is well captured in the stories. By using theories such as Social Identity by Samovar combines with Third Space by Homie Bhabha, the writer gets some results related to the statement of the problems. The writer divides the diaspora space into two categories; private space and public space. Private space means the closest things of a space, such as home and family. The writer finds that diasporian people look be more native because they do activities just like in their own country. In the analysis the writer finds it in the way of presenting the food, their physical appearance, and how they give name to their children. The second is public space, in this part the writer finds that the asian mindset exists among the diasporian in making decision or doing something even in public space such school or another environments. From this result, it can be concluded that even though the people live in Australia, but they still have the thinking pattern like asian. Therefore, this can indicate the existence of diaspora space in public space.

Later some results are found in the process of shaping the characters cultural identity deals with the diaspora space term. There are four steps or stages found to shape the identity such as unexamined identity, conformity, resistance and separatism, and the last one is integration. These four stages are found in minority identity development in Samovar, by Martin and Nakayama theory of developing identity. The first is unexamined identity, in this stage the characters tend to be unaware with their own cultural identity and ignore the issue of ethnicity. The characters do not care about what they belong to, where they come from, and why they have to do the activities related their nativeness. The second is conformity, this stage explains that the characters endeavor to be fitted in with the culture, and they do the activities of their native but they actually try hard to stay on it. The third is resistance and separatism, this stage gives the characters feeling of interesting to get know about their native culture, but at the same time the act of rejecting of all or selected aspects about the native culture happen. However the last stage makes up everything better, integration brings the sense of pride with the native culture

Suggestion

Alice Pung's *Growing up Asian in Australia* is a great anthology book and of course it is categorized as literary work with lot of amazing stories on it. The writer chooses this literary work because the uniqueness of the stories based on lot of cultures written in the book. The combination between native culture and diasporian life boxed in a deep explicit message with the simple style of writing. The writer chooses the four stories in random based on the suitability with the topic, and it is about diaspora space.

However, this study may have some limitation in the topic discussion. Since it is limited, for the further discussion the writer suggests another researcher to find out the different topic such as the impact of diaspora space through the characters' life style in psychology aspect with different background of culture. Therefore the other researcher will give contribution in developing this literary work and the topic discussion. The writer hopes that this study can be useful for other researcher as the comparison and references to the reader.

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