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# Jhumpa Lahiri: American, Indian American, Global, or Transnational writer?

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## Abstract

Born in London to immigrant Bengali parents who later moved to Rhode Island, Jhumpa Lahiri, the Pulitzer Prize- winning author of *The Interpreter of Maladies*, exemplifies the postcolonial experience of many of her protagonists. Her major thematic preoccupations with border crossings, dislocations, and generational conflicts place her solidly within the postcolonial canon as well as within a more universalist tradition. She is often labeled a women's writer or a transnational feminist writer. However, her credentials as an American writer are also firmly in place—she is seen as an American writer, a South Asian American writer, an Asian American writer. For some critics including Rachel Adams, she has become the avatar of an "American literary globalism." In this paper, I want to delve more closely into the issue of placing or categorizing writers, primarily Lahiri, whose writing deals with transcultural and transnational contexts, and who deliberately label themselves as global. In the process, I also wish to muddle the categories, Indian America, South Asian America, and Asian American. Through an examination of her novels, I will argue that Lahiri's works are firmly embedded in transnationalism but in a way that allows her protagonists much more varied and nuanced cultural values. This is especially true for her female characters whose resist easy incorporation into either country's gender stereotypes

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