

## DIFFERENT GENERATIONS, DISTINCT LIFESTYLES, SAME FEELING OF HIRAETH: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY OF KEN LIU'S "THE PAPER MENAGERIE"

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**Abstract:** The wave of immigration in recent decades has heralded new versions of colonialism. Thus, attention to the phenomenon of migration has gained a special place in literature. Among diaspora writers, one can mention Ken Liu and his "The Paper Menagerie". In the course of this paper, at first and with the help of Edward Said's theory of orientalism, a thorough discussion of the family's and Americans' attitudes toward each other and the cultural differences between them will be provided. Then, the character of the mother, as a representative of the first-generation immigrants, and the boy, as a representative of second-generation immigrants, will be under scrutiny based on Homi Bhabha and William Safran's postcolonial ideas to delineate their path to their diasporic identities. In the final step, in the light of Eric Landowski's theory of social relations, Jack and his mother's distinct lifestyles in their host country will be analyzed to deduce that they chose *snob* and *dandy* lifestyles, respectively. The present paper will conclude that although different generations of immigrants have distinct lifestyles, they will consciously or unconsciously keep the connection with their homeland. Just like Jack, who undergoes an identity crisis and abandons his paper menagerie, his mother, and his Chinese heritage to assimilate into American culture. He loses both his mother and her magic, only to regain them to some extent at the end of the story, when he realizes that he, too, feels hiraeth. Although, the hiraeth that he felt was latent in his unconscious.

**Keywords:** Postcolonial Study, Diasporic Literature, Immigrants' Generational Differences, Lifestyle and Identity, Orientalism and Cultural Differences, Mimicry and Hybridity, Nostalgia and Hiraeth.

### Introduction

Diaspora, which once described Jewish dispersion, now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain which includes words like immigrants, expatriate, refugee, exile community, and an ethnic community of people living together in a foreign region, as the consequence of dispersal from an original homeland, in search of work, in pursuit of a trade or in the hope to find promised-land (Cohen 17). Moreover, postcolonialism critics investigate the relationship between the minority diasporic people and the majority people of the host country. They hear the suppressed voices of immigrants and study their work to understand their

situation. As Theodor Adorno once mentioned: "For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live." (83). Among diaspora writers, one can mention Ken Liu (1976-).

Ken Liu is a Chinese immigrant writer who was born in 1976. When Ken was 11 years old, his family immigrated to the United States, where later, he studied English Literature at Harvard. It did not take long for him to understand that his true calling in literature was science fiction. Throughout his career, he wrote over 50 short stories. However, he is most famous for his "The Paper Menagerie", which became the first work of fiction to win the Nebula, the Hugo, and the World Fantasy Award. It is a story about a bi-racial boy, Jack, who has an American father and a Chinese mother. His mother, who remained unnamed throughout the story, immigrated to America as a mail-ordered bride. When Jack was a kid, the only way to calm him was through origami, the art of paper folding, which is associated with Japanese and Chinese culture. Jack's mother creates an origami menagerie for him, and when she breathes into the origami, the menagerie comes to life. However, later in his life, he began to reject the paper menagerie, and to a greater extent, his Chinese heritage in order to assimilate with Americans.

Magic realism is a literary movement associated with a style of writing or technique that incorporates magical or supernatural events into a realistic narrative. The fusion of fact and fantasy is meant to question the nature of reality as well as call attention to the act of creation. (Galens 151) In Magical realism, the elements of reality and imagination are so elaborately interwoven that the reader simply accepts them, in such a way that all artificial and imaginary incidents in the storyline seem completely real and natural.

As a magic realism story, elements of reality and imagination are so elaborately interwoven in "The Paper Menagerie" that the reader simply accepts them. In other words, all artificial and imaginary incidents in the storyline seem completely real and natural. Moreover, magic realism in this story is intermingled with its unreliable narrator. The narrator of this story is Jack. What we hear from other characters is also going through the boy's filter. Jack himself confessed that due to his age at that time, he might wrongly interpret those events: "... perhaps I had only imagined that these paper constructions were once alive. The memory of children could not be trusted." (Liu 69). Nevertheless, it does not matter whether the paper menagerie is alive or it is all in the child's mind. Because, at the end, the whole point of using magic in this story is to talk about the cultural differences from a second-generation immigrant's point of view.

All in all, many East Asian immigrants are experiencing a crisis of identity. Therefore, there is a strong call for reevaluating and reviewing the migration experience of East Asians from their own viewpoints, which is provided through their diasporic literature. Through their narrations, these diasporic writers shed

light on immigrants' problems and struggles in their host country. Accordingly, Ken Liu's "The Paper Menagerie", a well-known and prize-winning short story by a Korean immigrant, has been chosen as a case study of the present study. By differentiating between two generations of immigrants and studying them based on their feelings and experiences in the host country, the present study delves into the tribulated lives of its East Asian immigrant characters, and it can help to shed light on the nature of immigrants' identity crises, the generational and cultural gap between them.

### **Orientalism and Exoticism**

Before getting into the migrant's point of view in the story, at first, it is necessary to understand and comprehend the view of the host country's inhabitants toward them. Westerners justified their cruel treatment of the colonized by constructing a belief that Said named Orientalism. According to Said, "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and the Occident." (3). In short, Westerners create some stereotypes constructing and suggesting that Easterners or Orientals are indolent, barber, unreliable, and immoral. In contrast, they regarded themselves, the Westerners or Occidentals, as mature, civilized, reliable, and moral. Thus, for centuries, and even now, the East has been the exotic Other for the West. Consciously or unconsciously, this set of attributes and features remained in the minds of the Westerners, and they began to see Easterners and those immigrants of Orient origins, like Jack's mother, as well as the second-generation immigrants, like Jack, as the exotic Others. This view is evident from the first encounter of the mother, who is a Chinese immigrant, with Connecticut inhabitants. When the neighbors came to welcome them to their new house, they said:

"He seems like a normal enough man. Why did he do that?"

"Something about the mixing never seems right. The child looks unfinished. Slanty eyes, white face. A little monster."

...

"Hello there! What's your name?"

"Jack," I said.

"That doesn't sound very Chinesey." (Liu 164)

First, they see the father's marriage to a Chinese woman as odd. They were baffled by the decision that the father made. He seems normal, so why would he marry an exotic Oriental? Does her Oriental magic possess him? Because otherwise, it seems impossible to comprehend for them. The father's case is debatable as well. His obsession with an Oriental woman can also be the fruit of the Orientalism view that Oriental women are aroused and sexy. Thus, it can be said that to fulfill his fetish for Oriental women, he received a mail-order bride,

who is a woman from a developing country that lists herself in catalogs in the hope of being selected by a man from a developed nation for marriage.

Also, to Westerners' eyes, the fruit of their magic, the boy, is a monster, simply because he possesses Oriental features. Although he was born in America, they judge him based on his appearance and the fact that his name does not suit his look. This view is vivid not only in the neighbors' attitude, but also in his classmates. In his school, he was bullied by Americans, who constantly called him "chink face" (Liu 165). These events were too much to handle for the kid at his age and, therefore, traumatized the boy. As a result, He rejected his Chinese heritage to fit in with other Americans.

### **Immigrants and Cultural Differences: Their Lifestyles in the Host Country**

As N. J. Adler argues, cultural difference involves the integrated and maintained system of socially acquired values, beliefs, and rules of conduct, which impact the range of accepted behaviors distinguishable from one societal group to another (Cited in Jackson and Guerra 2011). Immigrants face a whole new culture when they arrive in the host country. They encounter people who are nothing like them and even speak a different language. Coming to the host country, immigrants have several options for dealing with cultural differences: They can assimilate themselves into the host country, they can differentiate themselves from the host country's inhabitants, or they can possess a hybrid identity. Although, according to Bhabha, the formation of the hybrid identity is inevitable when two cultures clash, in the story, we see that Jack and his mother have chosen the first two options for their lifestyles.

In addition to the characters of the story, Liu tried to expand his theme of cultural difference by depicting it not only between the family versus Americans but also in various animals of the paper menagerie itself. All of them, sooner or later, got into myriads of troubles. Like when the water buffalo jumped into a soy sauce dish, and his legs became crooked. Also, when Jack tossed the paper shark into the aquarium, it sank to the bottom, and his mother made a new one out of a foil. Finally, one of Laohu's favorite activities was to pounce at sparrows, but once, a bird struck back and tore the tiger's ear; he avoided birds after that (Liu 163). The clash between Laohu and the bird can be seen as the clash of two civilizations, which is inevitable. The buffalo in the soy sauce could have represented Jack and his mother or all immigrants to a greater extent, absorbing different cultures that greatly affected them. The paper shark sinking into the water shows the host country's powerful yet destructive effects on Others. The survival of the tinfoil shark by assimilating to the situation of its surroundings can represent the lifestyle that is likely to survive in the host country. Therefore, since the paper menagerie symbolizes Chinese heritage in this story, all these events that happened to them foreshadow the family's situation.

According to Amir Ali Nojournian, lifestyle is not a pre-made thing that we are situated in. It is not a total individual independent choice as well. Instead, someone's lifestyle makes sense in a dialogue between an individual and the society that they live in. This dialogue gives value, meaning, and identity to both the subject and the object. Thus, human beings' identities are shaped and identified based on their lifestyle (Nojournian, 2016). Eric Landowski, a French semiotician, divides social relations into four semiotic systems: snob, dandy, chameleon, and bear. Each of these social systems has its particular behavior, which will be explained further by referring to immigrants' situations.

Landowski gave the term *Snob* to those who, by blind imitation of the host country inhabitants, argue that they are just like them, and their efforts are so visible that they betray their own true belonging. On the contrary, *dandy* refers to the lifestyle of those who cherish their difference and are ready to do anything to stand out from the host country's inhabitants. *Chameleons* are given to those who skillfully and cunningly put a mask on their faces. In other words, from the exterior, it seems that they are the same as the host country's inhabitants, and they are getting mistaken for someone who already belongs to the same world, however in secret, they have never separated from their motherland. The last lifestyle, the *bear*, refers to those who, with stubbornness and disobedience, destroy and question all the norms of the host country (Cited in Babak Moein 222-223).

### ***Snob and Dandy: The Lifestyles of Jack and His Mother***

With the previous information about social relationships in mind, it goes without saying that Jack's and his mother's lifestyles are snob and dandy, respectively. Jack, as a kid, was connected to his mother's land and her heritage. The only thing that could calm him at that age was his paper menagerie that her mother had made for him. However, soon, he became the subject of discrimination. He was intimidated by this discrimination, which affected his moral values and self-esteem. Age 10 was a turning point in his life. Mark, his neighbor and classmate, called his paper menagerie a "Chinese Garbage" (Liu 164) and insulted his mother for her exoticity. In fact, it was the first time that he got ashamed of his Chinese heritage and realized his difference from his classmates. Moreover, he sensed a rejection from Americans for the first time. From then, he sensed rejection and the heavy gazes of Americans almost everywhere.

As a child, that was unbearable for him. He wanted to be as same as his classmates and to fit in with them. He was being rejected for something that he had no choice upon. Thus, being rejected for who he was, he changed his lifestyle and disassociated any connection he had with his Chinese culture, which included his paper menagerie and his mother, whom he felt he looked nothing like: "We had nothing in common. She might as well be from the moon. I would

hurry on to my room, where I could continue my all-American pursuit of happiness.” (Liu 167). Thus, borrowing Landowski’s terminology, he chooses the snob lifestyle now. He blindly imitates Americans’ behaviors and attitudes to assimilate to their costumes and traditions. He becomes a self-centered character who does not care for anyone but himself, and that is probably why he never gave us his parents’ names. He once even told his mother that she did not belong to this country (ibid. 166). He let go of his Chinese heritage, holidays, and language. He is hiding it away like he hides the origami away. Jack, in fact, is rejecting himself when he rejects the paper menagerie. The letter is his mother’s final gift to him – a way to make Jack reconcile with his motherland’s identity.

Jack’s mother’s case is totally different. She immigrated to the United States of America, the so-called promised land, or the land of opportunities, as a picture bride. Although she felt that her life was about to be changed for good, from the moment she lay foot in America, she instantly felt the shock of recognition. She recognized that everyone was urging her to assimilate. It did not take so long for her to realize that she had become double oppressed due to her gender and her status as an immigrant. Moreover, she learned that she must constantly change her identity and lifestyle.

She is clinging to her past, and she is praising her homeland. She wants to be differentiated from Americans because her motto is *viva la différence*<sup>1</sup>. Thus, in Landowski’s terminology, her lifestyle is that of a dandy. As a typical dandy, she refused to assimilate herself to her host country till her dying breath. As can be seen on her deathbed, she talks about Qingming, a Chinese festival for the dead, and wants her son to cherish that holiday and remember her on that day, which is in itself a sign of her nonconformity to her host country.

Perhaps their generational differences and their different choice of lifestyle are best evident in the case of language and their mimicry. In most nation-states worldwide, the national language has been constructed as a central ideology for classifying and categorizing people. Thus, language has become the major definer of national identity (Hogan-Braun, Mar-Molinero, and Stevenson 46). In this light, nowadays, it is widely believed that migrants’ usage of the host country’s hegemonic language serves as a symbol of belonging, yielding, and inclusion. Today, millions of people live in a language that is not their own. They speak, think, imagine, and make love in a language that is not theirs. Mairead Nic Craith, in her *Narratives of Place, Belonging and Language*, discussed the same point and argued that:

This movement between languages may involve some elements of choice, and migrants may seek to assimilate themselves to the new environment as completely as possible and engage fully with the new language. Alternatively,

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<sup>1</sup> Borrowed from French, literally “long live the difference”; Used universally to express appreciation of diversity.

they may continue with the regular use of the language of their birth while acquiring and speaking the language of the host community only where necessary or appropriate. These strategies are not mutually exclusive and can be used at different times depending on circumstances. (4)

In "The Paper Menagerie," when the father urged the mother to speak English because she is in America, she responds that: "'If I say 'love,' I feel here.' She pointed to her lips. 'If I say 'ai,' I feel here.'" She put her hand over her heart." (Liu 166). It is when she talks in Chinese that she is able to talk freely and with heart. On the other hand, in the family house, where she was a slave, whenever they caught her learning English, they beat her up, because they thought she would inform the police. That can also be a traumatic experience for her, which results in her reluctance to learn English later in life. She finds speaking English torture. That is why she begins her letter with an explanation in this regard: "Because I have to write with all my heart, I need to write to you in Chinese." (ibid. 171).

### ***Mimicry and The Case of Language***

However, when she saw that her son was distancing from her, she began to speak gibberish English by imitating Americans. This is what Homi Bhabha labeled as mimicry in his groundbreaking work, *The Location of Culture*. According to him, mimicry occurs when members of a colonized society try to imitate their colonizers' language, dress, politics, and cultural attitudes. Further, for Bhabha, mimicry is the process by which the colonized subject is reproduced as "almost the same, but not quite" (86). He finished his argument by marking that, more often than not, mimicry leads to mockery on behalf of not only host country inhabitants but also the people of the homeland.

Throughout the history, the diaspora generations have been actively engaged in acts of mimicry as a means of survival in their host societies. First of all, mimicry is vivid in Jack, who is classified as the second generation of immigrants. In his attempt to be the same as any other American, Jack let go of his motherland heritage and began to blindly imitate American culture. He gets angry every time his mother speaks Chinese to him or even when she prepares a Chinese dish for the diner. He even let go of his paper menagerie, the only object in his childhood that could soothe him. Further, as was mentioned before, in this story, the paper menagerie is a symbol of Chinese heritage, and Jack by replacing it with action figures toys (a symbol of American culture) shows his decision to let go of his Chinese heritage and embrace an American way of life. However, no matter how much he thought of himself as same as them, he never succeeded. He still bears American's heavy gazes wherever he goes. In other words, he could never and will never be able to disintegrate himself from his homeland. No matter how much he rejected his motherland and its heritage, they are always situated in his unconscious. This is the point he realized at the

end, right after reading his mother's Chinese letter. This incident was the first time in a very long time that he became close to his Chinese heritage, and because of this, he saw his paper menagerie come back alive again right before his eyes.

Next, mimicry is vivid in the mother's case, a first-generation immigrant, when she began to talk English as a means to obtain her connection with her son. However, since she could not speak English properly, their relationship became colder and colder every day. According to Jack, whenever she started to talk English, "her accent and broken sentences embarrassed me. I tried to correct her. Eventually, she stopped speaking altogether if I was around." (Liu 166). Then, it is obvious that her mimicry led to mockery. Embarrassed by this incident, she stopped speaking English altogether. However, she was persistent in her decision to keep in touch with her son, the only person that made his host country tolerable for him. Therefore, she began to mime things and hug him the way she saw American mothers do, but even that was "ridiculous, exaggerated, and graceless" on Jack's account (ibid. 167). Nevertheless, she had to obtain her relationship with her son because her relationship was of high value to her, and Jack reminded her of her homeland. But no matter how much she tried to mimic Americans, she could not win his son over. Soon, she gave up her act of mimicry, and decided to be who she was, a Chinese woman who was forced to leave her homeland.

### ***Hiraeth as a Manifestation of Diaspora: Unhomeliness, Nostalgia, and Longing***

As mentioned before, hiraeth is a Welsh word with no exact equivalence in English, which embodies the same connotation. It is a Welsh word, that encompasses several senses at once. A homesickness for a home to which you cannot return; The nostalgia, the yearning, the grief for the lost places of your past; A deep and irrational bond felt with a time, era, place, or person. Thus, it is a blend of unhomeliness, nostalgia, and longing. In this sense, as I will argue, there is no better word to describe Jack and his mother's feeling in their host country.

Since the whole story is from the boy's point of view, we only hear the mother's story in her letter at the end. In the letter, which she wrote in Chinese, she talked about her happy childhood and how the tragedy struck her family, resulting in her escape to Hong Kong. Although she became a refugee in Hong Kong, she left a big part of her back in China. Several years later, when she escaped from slavery, she became a mail-order bride and, thus, became an immigrant for the second time. She is the perfect example of diaspora. William Safran, in his article entitled "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," attributed several features to diasporas:



They or Their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original “center” to one or more peripheral, or foreign, regions. They retain a collective memory about their homeland. They believe that they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it. They regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would eventually return — when conditions are appropriate. They believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity. And, they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship. (83-84)

Borrowing Homi Bhabha’s terminology, she felt unhomeliness that is she was unwelcomed in both her host country and her homeland. It must be mentioned first that “to be unhomed is not to be homeless” by Bhabha’s accounts (9). According to Bhabha, lack of identity manifests itself in diverse forms, one of which is unhomeliness. To experience such a feeling involves both dislocations of a migrant as a result of diaspora and the unfamiliarity of recognizing oneself in this moment of dislocation.

In short, unhomeliness is a feeling that the unhomed subject do not feel at home in any nation and culture, because they believe that they do not belong anywhere. In America, the mother felt unhomey and constantly felt nostalgic for her homeland, to which she could not return for political reasons. Also, even if she could, she would not return to China for the sake of her son, Jack. After two migrations, Jack’s mother settled in America, but she still felt lonely, alienated, and displaced. She was dispersed from her home in China to America, where she knew no one and was lonely (Liu 172). There, she retains a collective memory of her homeland and tries to bring their costumes, such as Qingming, into America (ibid. 168). Moreover, she always knew that she would never be fully accepted by Americans due to her looks and language, so she just stopped trying and talking at all (ibid. 166). Although she was forced to leave China, she never stopped feeling nostalgia for China, her true home (ibid. 171). To sum up, she was committed to the restoration of their original homeland and its safety and prosperity. Hence, she is a diaspora in its perfect sense. Moreover, since she realized that she neither totally belonged to China nor America, her unhomeliness exacerbated.

Although their lives were tough in her hometown, she was happy merely because she knew those people and could understand their language. Out of misery, she had to escape from her homeland to Hong Kong and then to America. After two migrations, she settled in America, but she still felt lonely,

alienated, and displaced: “no one understood me, and I understood nothing.” (ibid. 172). It all changed when Jack was born. Since she had lost everything from her homeland and did not know or understand anyone or anything in her host country, the newborn immediately, in a sense, became her homeland. As she said, with her son, she could “remake a small piece of everything that [she] loved and lost.” (Liu 172). He instantly became the only reason that she existed, the only one who could understand her, and the only one who gave her back her lost identity:

I was so happy when I looked into your face and saw shades of my mother, my father, and myself. I had lost my entire family, all of Sigulu, everything I ever knew and loved. But there you were, and your face was proof that they were real. I hadn't made them up. (ibid.)

As a result, she began to raise him as her mother once raised her. Her mother was the one who taught origami to her, and then, she tried to pass down this culture to her son. Everything was fine, and she was happy when Jack accepted Chinese culture, but as he grew up and started to reject his Chinese heritage, she felt alienated once again. In a sense, it could be said that she became an immigrant for the third time. This time, it was not a physical immigration, but a spiritual one with a profound impact on her life. After that, her nostalgia for her homeland intensified: “I felt I was losing everything all over again. Why won't you talk to me, son? the pain makes it hard to write.” (ibid. 173). They felt apart more and more with each day passing by, and as formerly mentioned, this became evident in various aspects of their life.

Furthermore, Jack himself can be classified as an example of a second-generation diaspora. No matter how hard he tries not to be in the discussion of being half Chinese, he never succeeds. Interestingly, by probing William Safran's theory of diaspora in his character, it became evident that as a person who harshly rejects his motherland, he had most of the diasporic characteristics that Safran counts. Since Jack's mother was a Chinese woman who has “been dispersed from a specific original 'center'” (Safran 83), thus the first characteristic is axiomatic. Moreover, as a child, he was profoundly connected with his mother and his Chinese heritage. Also, he, along with his mother, celebrated various Chinese costumes and, in this way, shared a collective memory about China with his mother. Although he let go of everything that was Chinese in the hope that he could be American, because he thought that as long as he held to his Chinese heritage and his paper menagerie, he would never be able to blend in with his classmates, let alone his host country in general.

Nevertheless, in the end, he realized that he still cannot be as American as others due to the fact that in his heart and in his unconscious, there are still Chinese parts in him. That being said, he finally realized that this was not a defect. Rather, this was something magical that would make him special. All in

all, he is also a diaspora in its literal sense that he is in constant confusion about his homeland, belonging, and identity. He himself is feeling unhomeliness since, throughout his turbulent life, he was not sure where does he actually belong. He lives in-between two spaces, cultures, and nations without totally belonging to any of them. In this light, this notion of not belonging to neither side and yet both is similar to Du Bois' notion of double consciousness. In his book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois describes double consciousness as "a peculiar sensation ... [the] sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings" (Du Bois 1994: 3). This feeling of being caught between cultures, or as Du Bois labeled 'double consciousness' makes Jack and his mother to feel that they have no cultural 'home,' or a sense of cultural belonging and therefore to feel unhomed. In other words, their cultural identity crisis has made them psychological refugees.

### Conclusion

There exists a word in Welsh culture that has no English equivalent because it encompasses several senses at once. That word is *hiraeth*, which "combines elements of homesickness, nostalgia, and longing. Interlaced, however, is the subtle acknowledgment of an irretrievable loss – a unique blend of place, time, and people that can never be recreated." (Crossley-Baxter). It is a homesickness for a home to which you cannot return; The nostalgia, the yearning, the grief for the lost places of your past that you cannot revisit; A deep and irrational bond felt with a time, era, place, or person. There is no better word than *hiraeth* to explain Jack and his mother's feelings in Ken Liu's "The Paper Menagerie".

In her letter, the mother explains how she had to leave her beloved hometown amid the civil war, and she expressed her longing for the return, but she could no longer return. Perpetually, she felt homesick, and she constantly grieves for her previous life in China. Back there, she was happy with her family and neighbors, but in America, her only delight was to think about her time in China. In other words, she made a deep bond with a place, China, and with a time, her childhood. In addition, after she bore a child who possessed her family's appearance, she made a deep bond with a person as well, her son, Jack.

However, as Jack grew up, he chose a different lifestyle than his mother. Borrowing Eric Landowski's terminology, while his mother chose a dandy lifestyle and did anything to differentiate herself from Americans, Jack leaned toward a snob lifestyle and did anything to assimilate with Americans. To do so, he rejects his mother, along with her magic and her cultural heritage. The mother, who finally became happy in America after the birth of her child, again became isolated and thus, in a sense, became an immigrant for the third time.

Furthermore, it is evident that the mother, as a dandy, consciously keeps her connection with her homeland throughout the story. She consciously differentiated herself from Americans in order to be attracted to her homeland. However, with her son's birth and in order to be close to him and keep his connection with him, she tried her best to mimic Americans but her mimicry was not fulfilled. In Bhabha's words, she was "almost the same, but not quite" (86). Therefore, her mimicry led to mockery from not only the host country's inhabitants but also her own son.

However, at the end of the story, we understand that Jack, who chose a snob lifestyle to fit in America and, consequently, vehemently rejected his motherland, saw Lahou become alive once again after he read his mother's letter written in Chinese. After reading his mother's life story in her letter and being in touch with Chinese words once again, he regained his mother's magic to some extent. The letter was his mother's final gift to him – a way to regain his lost identity. In the final part of the story, we also sense a profound hiraeth in Jack, too. He might not even know that, but he himself feels hiraeth. A homesickness for a land that he was never situated in; A deep bond felt with her mother and the time that her mother was still alive. Since he was the object of racism, he had to change his lifestyle and let go of his motherland's heritage to assimilate into the American way of living. However, deep down, he was always displaced.

All in all, it can be said that hiraeth is an eternal story of all immigrants from every generation, disregarding their chosen lifestyles. It was only when he got slightly in touch with his motherland through the Chinese language of his mother's letter that this feeling of his became evident. After all, it turns out that he kept his connection with his motherland latent in his unconscious without even knowing it. Thus, it could be said that disregarding what lifestyle immigrants choose, they will have an ambivalent diasporic identity, in which they, consciously or unconsciously, keep the connection with their motherland. Stories of immigrants are stories of constant hiraeth with no way out.

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#### DIFFÉRENTES GÉNÉRATIONS, MODES DE VIE DISTINCTS, MÊME SENTIMENT D'HIRAETH : UNE ÉTUDE POSTCOLONIALE DE "THE PAPER MENAGERIE" DE KEN LIU

Le phénomène de la migration au cours des dernières décennies introduit de nouvelles versions du colonialisme. Par conséquent, la migration a été introduite comme l'un des sujets spéciaux dans la littérature. L'un des écrivains de la diaspora est Ken Liu et son "The Paper Menagerie". Tout d'abord, à l'aide de la théorie orientale d'Edward Said, cet article discutera en détail de l'attitude des familles et des Américains les uns envers les autres et des différences culturelles entre eux. Ensuite, le caractère de la mère en tant que représentant des immigrés de première génération et du fils en tant que représentant des immigrés de deuxième génération sera sous surveillance à partir des idées postcoloniales d' Homi Bhabha et William Safran afin de déterminer leur chemin vers leurs identités diasporiques. Selon la théorie des relations sociales d'Eric Landowski, les modes de vie distinctifs de Jack et de sa mère dans leur pays d'accueil seront finalement analysés afin de prouver qu'ils ont respectivement choisi des modes de vie *snob* et à la *dandy*. Le présent article conclut que différentes générations d'immigrants maintiennent consciemment ou inconsciemment leur lien avec leur terre, bien qu'ils aient des modes de vie différents. Par exemple, Jack, qui vit une crise d'identité et quitte le Paper Menagerie, sa mère et son héritage chinois pour s'intégrer à la culture américaine. Il perd à la fois sa mère et sa magie, mais à la fin de l'histoire, quand il se sent hiraeth, il les retrouve en quelque sorte. Cependant, son hiraeth était caché dans son subconscient.

**Mots-clés :** Étude postcoloniale, Littérature diasporique, Différences générationnelles des immigrés, Mode de vie et identité, Orientalisme et différences culturelles, Mimétisme et Hybridité, Nostalgie et Hiraeth.