

# Identity and Destruction: Asian American in The Namesake by Mira Nair's Film

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In Mira Nair's film, *The Namesake*, the disparate cultures of India and America affirm to the binary paradigm of "the one" and "the other", manifesting the dominance of one from the other and its impact to influence and cause cultural and identity issues. The collision of the two cultures forms a process of trying to construct an identity and a destruction of an ethnic identity, with different factors to consider such as space and other sociocultural codes. This film about the Indian American also shows the concept of model-minority image, standards and expectations imposed to Asian Americans. *The Namesake* embodies the cultural and identity issues of an [Asian American](#), particularly the Indian Americans, exemplifying the experiences of the intersection of contrasting cultures, marginalization, generation conflicts and identity crisis.

In *Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Making Asian American Differences*, Lowe argues that the concept of Asian American is crucial in itself because it emphasizes and intensifies the marginalization of Asian-origin community in the United States. She asserts that Asian American identity becomes "an organizing tool" to formulate Asians in America as homogenous entity, which for her is strongly refutable (511). The film adaptation of *The Namesake* exhibits this heterogeneity of Asian communities that Lowe argues, narrating

the Asian American experience of another ethnicity in the United States—the Indians. The film shows Lowe’s argument of the multiplicity and heterogeneity of Asian American experience, away from the usual stereotyped idea of the Asian American only correspond to Chinese and Japanese Americans. Mira Nair’s *The Namesake* proves the multiplicity of culture in the context of Asian Amer...

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...entity of the India Americans and the different factors, sociocultural or spatiotemporal, which affect the generation conflicts of immigrants. It exhibits the impact of the Western culture to structure different cultural issues of identity.

#### Works Cited

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