



SOCIO-CULTURAL IDENTITY AND DISPLACEMENT IN A POST-NATIONAL WORLD: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF TAWADA'S SUGGESTED IN THE STARS (2024)

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Abstract

This study explores the connection between displacement and identity in the post-national world through the textual and character analysis of Yoko Tawada's *Suggested in the Stars* (2024). This study focuses on how the stories and experiences of transnational characters change our perception of belongingness, inclusion and socio-cultural identity in a dynamic social setting that is globally fluid and open to new boundaries. This study aims to investigate the experiences of individuals who grieve losing their cultural identity while encountering hybridity, cultural diversity, displacement and identity crisis. Stuart Hall's theories of cultural identity and diaspora (1990) are used as a theoretical framework to conduct textual analysis and to investigate the complex and dispersed nature of identity through the lens of memories, diaspora and history. Hall's theory put an emphasis on identity as endless event that has its own vividness and offers an exceptional grounds to understand the concept of dislocation in various cultural context. Investigating, exploring and comprehending the interrelationship between socio-cultural identity, displacement, cultural diversity, diasporic existence and crises as its consequence in global settings is need of an hour. This article concludes by highlighting facts essential for individuals to understand how shifting identities within global spaces could result in identity crisis, cultural dislocation, and displacement in post-national world.

Keywords: *Diaspora, Displacement, Identity, Post-Nationalism, Stuart Hall, Yoko Tawada*

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1. Introduction

In the era of massive globalization, the eroding cultural boundaries are forming some rigid form of identity, and individual urge of displacement, in search of better lifestyle, consequently giving birth to new forms of social and cultural complexities. Traditional notions of identity, stability of territorial borders, and concept of cultural harmony and unity are now being reshaped under the impact of diaspora, transnational connectivity, and international political systems (Adamson, 2012). This evolving pattern has inspired individuals to critically understand the role of the national state in terms of identify and identification and to define its ties to political organizations. (Bornschiefer, et al 2021). Therefore, it is investigated in this study that how identity is constructed, challenged and shared in rapidly growing post-national cultural settings.

Along with globalization, postcolonial processes within its historical context, neoliberal reforms, and postcolonial mindset have all together challenged the traditional concepts of territoriality and the notion of affiliation (Paasi et al., 2021). The 20th century era, more particularly following World War II, has seen an increase in the number of people moving to other parts of the world on their own or were somehow forced to displace, that ultimately resulted in the development of diasporic communities, hence, now challenging the capacity of states to establish a sense of the definition of identity (Benton 2016). Members of such communities have already established strong emotional, social, cultural and political association with many other nations, which makes it hard to define distinct identities.

The term “identity” not only refers to the self-identity of an individual, rather deals with the broader concepts of society, such as religion, nation, race, culture, ethnicity, and gender associated with them (Hall 2011). Identity is an indefinite, indistinct and interdependent concept that is rapidly shifting its meaning considering the political, social, cultural and historical shifts throughout the world. Post-national times, the identities of people are becoming increasingly indistinct which is beyond the scope of global connection and geographical boundaries, however, borders, which could be of a nation or a state, have powerful impact on individuals experiencing and adapting new ideas. These borders could help them maintain distinct identity and cultural exchange (Donnan,

2021). It is now opening broader horizon for individuals who share various ethnic groups, language, culture and social setting and raises doubts on how one being part of that group or social setup could feel marginalized and disengaged.

Displacement on the other hand is far beyond just the physical movement of people from one place to another; rather it refers to the shift of cultural, psychological, social and emotional aspects associated with the individuals, changing the meaning of identity and leading to identity crises. (Schiller, 2021). Most often, this displacement is imposed forcibly, while leaving the individuals in uncertain state of “in-between” and being (Said, 2000). Any individuals who have been through displacement will likely have a struggling phase to reconcile both their past and the present, which could leave them in the state of bewilderment and develop a sense of loss of identity.

The post-national system, which has been a center of investigation of numerous scholars, including Habermas (2018), can be described generally as a state where states' supremacy in the national arena can be questioned in favor of cosmopolitan and transnational citizens, as well as a state where one can challenge the global debate on human rights. The idea is cognizant of the increasing importance of diasporic as well as supranational multinational corporations that define individuals as well as their lives. Nowadays, the notion of belonging more to Western Society or belonging to a particular group does not have to be limited by geographical, territorial or any boundaries associated with individuals' birthright, instead it is multifaceted and enumerates different cultural identities (Bhandari, 2021).

This research aims to understand how individuals and groups manage their identity within the context of displacement in a post-national society. It also aims to examine the sociopolitical implications of these shifting identities - particularly in relation to power, recognition, and cultural continuity.

The post-national environment is growing more uncertain, and the process of forming identity is happening in a variety of geographical, social, and cultural setups, regions and places; highlighting that displacement isn't limited to people who are refugees or immigrants. Individuals who reside in their own country of origin may also experience social or political isolation, displacement and identity crises due to the increasing globalization of media, in addition to international markets for labor or promotion of multicultural identity (Best 2019). Developing a strong sense of displacement in one's own country, where one is originally from, could be detrimental to their notion of belongingness, identity, and rootedness as the basis of identities.

Hybridity is one of the concepts that is frequently explored in the writings of Homi Bhabha (1994) and is a crucial aspect of understanding identity in the multiple contexts. Hybridity is used as a term to describe a phenomenon or is a reference to the merging of different cultures due to the interplay between migration, colonialism, and cross-cultural exchanges. This concept dispels traditional binary distinctions such as self/native, native/native and foreign/native but rather embraces the space between them, where new meanings and identities can be created. It's important to understand that the notion of hybridity doesn't need to be an ideal problem; it could create confusion and disorientation as well as social isolation if people's identities do not match with the dominant narratives of culture.

Furthermore, it's increasing the consciousness of diasporas, which is an awareness that one is located in a different country than where they were born while still remaining connected back to home, has redefined the concepts of community involvement and political participation (Cohen, 2022). Diasporic communities are typically guided by the idea of "long-distance nationalism" (Aydar, 2018), and they are involved in cultural, political, and social concerns in their countries of origin and in their host countries as well. As a consequence of their transnational nature, these relations can make it challenging for them to define legal standards and a robust definition of citizenship. It is usually dependent on the state sovereignty and territorial boundaries.

Considering the increasing number of people living in the world that has formed as a result of conflicts and changes in the climate, politics, social settings, cultural and geographical shift, economic conditions and global tensions, it has been observed that governments face the conflicting demands of the sovereignty, security, and human rights of all beings. Whereas forcing stateless people using power to displace without legal rights and documentation is among the major aspects of modern displacement. However, the digital era allows them to keep connected - those who have been forced to keep connections to their community and religious life that transcends limits. This leads to what Levitt (2001) calls "transnational social fields"—networks of identity and exchange that transcend borders while providing them protection.

This research explores how identity is constructed in the context of marginalization in addition to movement and diversity. The research will examine the stories of displacement from a social and political perspective as well as will focus on how post-nationality shifts and creates identity. With this study it would be easier to comprehend the way sense of belongingness changes in a time when identity, nationality, country,

home, and self-have become less and less dependable notions for those who have been displaced.

1.1. Introduction of the Author, Her Work, and Research Questions

Yoko Tawada, who was born in Tokyo in the year 1960, is a Japanese writer and is famous for her writings in Japanese as well as German. After turning 22, the author moved from Tokyo to pursue her studies in Hamburg, Germany, where she studied German literature. The following year she received her doctorate degree from the University of Zurich. Currently she is staying and working in Berlin where she is piling up a large collection of work that includes short stories, novellas, plays, essays, and poems. Being a bicultural and bilingual writer, this trait permits her to explore and question identity, language, displacement and interrelation between these concepts. She has won numerous prestigious recognition and prizes as a writer and artist, and worth mentioning are Akutagawa Prize, Adelbert Von Chamisso Prize, Tanizaki Prize, Kleist Prize, and Goethe Medal.

Suggested in the Stars (2024) is the second in Tawada's *Scattered All Over the Earth* trilogy. The tale narrates the adventure of Hiruko, who has fled a region due to the effects of climate change on a submerged island and is on the plan to move across Europe in search of those who speak her mother tongue. Accompanied by a diverse group of companions—including Knut, a Danish linguist; Akash, an Indian trans woman; and Nanook, a Greenlander asserting his Eskimo identity—the ensemble embodies Tawada's exploration of multiculturalism and linguistic diversity. The characters travel across the country to Copenhagen to search for Susanoo, who is a blind sushi chef thought to belong to Hiruko's heritage of language. The story is digging deeply into investigating identity, communication, language as well as struggle to live in a society that is marked by changing boundaries as well as ecological shifts. The author's unique blend of edgy linguistics and deep understanding of philosophical study is evident throughout the novel and provides readers with an exceptional experience.

1.2. Research Questions

- How does *Suggested in the Stars* represent identity as a fragmented and dynamic process shaped by diaspora and cultural memory?
- In what ways do Tawada's characters experience and negotiate cultural dislocation in a post-national context?

- How does the novel challenge essentialist notions of identity and belonging through its transnational narrative structure?

1.3. Research Objectives

This research aims to:

- To critically examine how Tawada constructs hybrid subjectivities through the experiences of displaced characters.
- To apply Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity to analyze the novel's portrayal of identity as a process marked by difference and transformation.
- To explore how *Suggested in the Stars* reflects and critiques post-national life through its representation of transnational displacement and cultural multiplicity.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that it may provide better understanding of the process and phenomenon of creating and shifting identities in a post-national society through textual analysis. By analyzing the ideas through the theoretical framework that was developed by Stuart Hall, this research will explore and investigate how issues of diaspora and displacement as well as the hybridity can be portrayed through fiction. This study emphasizes the significance of writing to represent dispersed identities that are shaped by the past of culture and globalization. The study provides insight into the shifting ways of being a part of an increasingly globalized and connected society.

2. Theoretical Framework

The research is using Hall's theory of social and cultural identity as a lens and framework to comprehend the complex nature of the concept of identity and displacement during the post-national period. The research focuses on the shifting identities and the fragmentation of identity. Hall rejects the belief that the concept of identity is distinctive, exclusive, and has roots in the historical or biological beginnings. Hall claims that identities are formed by a continuous process of representation, differentiation, and transformation influenced by the influences of the past and culture (Hall 1990).

Hall examines two ways of thinking about the notion of identity. One of them is the commonality that is shared by all cultures, and it is built on experiences shared from history as well as collective memories. This approach is commonly employed by the

movement against the colonial system or by nationalists to create an identity of solidarity. A different approach, which is more vigorously applicable, is to consider the idea of identity as continuous "production," always in development and shift. This is especially appropriate in post-national settings because identities are continually shaped by the experience of those living across borders having diasporic knowledge as well as hybrid relations across various cultures (Hall 2011).

In a post-national world—characterized by globalization, deterritorialization, and mobility—identities are constantly being reconfigured through displacement, migration, and intercultural contact. Hall's framework allows us to study the ways that how those individuals who are geographically or metaphorically separated negotiate their identities within a variety of different, sometimes conflicting, cultural stories. Diasporic identities, for example, may take on the shape of points of identification rather than having a fixed origin, drawing on multiple sources and developing distinct hybrid identities (Hall 1990).

In addition, Hall's conviction, that there are now new ethnicities, is essential for understanding how postcolonial individuals fight against stigmas of discrimination and build identities that transcend categorical distinctions of native/foreign hosts/home, center/margin, and host/native. The writer argues that the concept of identity as a concept of culture is not an opportunity to return to the past, but rather, it's a foundational and social action that is defined by the power of difference and interrelations (Hall 2011). It is crucial to understand those who are dispersed from post-national society, which typically includes the mix of geographical areas, languages, and ethnic communities.

The identities are created by a number of methods, which include change and contestation as a result of globalization that highlights a world as a sphere where displacement transcends physical and social presence is more often considered as symbolic.

3. Analysis

Before we dive deep into the complexities of the dialects in the novel *Suggested in the Stars*, it is important to consider the novel as a place in which the diasporic identities do not just appear in the narrative; rather they are actively constructed and reconstructed. The characters from Tawada have been placed in the post-national world, which raises questions about the interconnectedness of their identities. The dispersed self-image of the characters is like the claim as suggested by Hall (1990) that identity does not contain the same elemental essence that can never change, but it is constantly changing in location within the framework of culture, history, and the force. The novel is an attempt to discover how language, memory, and movement can form hybrid characters. The study looks at a

handful of the major chapters in the novel to better understand how the story is a play on the complex nature of displacement and also the imaginative reconstitution of the notion of identity within a global post-national world.

One of the characters in *Suggested in the Stars* (2024) explicitly exclaim “I don’t know where I came from. I don’t know who my birth parents are, either. Maybe I’m from far, far away from here. Maybe I was born on a wandering star, and dropped down onto Earth” (Tawada 2024, p. 6) It effectively encapsulates the fragmented and constantly changing nature of diasporic identities. In line with the theoretical context, this section demonstrates the fact that identity is not an indestructible characteristic but rather a continually evolving process affected by the experiences of historic displacement and cultural fractures.

Stuart Hall (1990) argues that identity as a concept isn't a permanent source that is able to be found, but instead Stuart Hall (1990) argues that the concept of cultural identity is a "production" that is constantly shifting, created by memories, representation, and the development of new ideas and concepts of identity. The narrator's state of uncertainty expressed in the novel not knowing about their biological parents, birth place, place of origin, or center of belongingness exemplifies their dislocation from a coherent narrative of the self. Instead of deriving identity from biographical or ethnic origins, the person gives an esoteric, abstract account that they might have been "born amid the waning star" which signifies the creative reconstruction of identity in the absence of concrete sources.

The wandering star here symbolizes the robust sense of living a diasporic life which is ever changing across the borders and boundaries that are both real and symbolic. This suggests an identity that isn't determined by geographical locations; instead, it is shaped being dynamic and diverse. Hall (1990) stresses the fact that diasporic identities can be described in terms of ruptures or discontinuities and are usually derived from an individual's perception of nostalgia and loss. The story that is imagined of the narrator's birthplace may be a way of responding, which is a creative response in their shared history as a reaction to the dispersal of their life in lieu of looking for something that can be unified.

In addition, this kind of provoking thought can result in hybrid identities that may have resulted from their interaction with various languages, historical, and cultural traditions. Hall (2011) states that identities of these people are based on positions and places; however, they're not a fundamental part of their identity. They evolve over time as well as through the consequences of differences. The desire of a speaker to believe in stories about their roots is marked as far, far away, could be an indication of the hybridity in existence as a result of the process of displacement.

The idea in *Stars* is a reminder that identity can be a fragmented diasporic concept, derived from the values that were once prevalent and is a creative reconstruction of oneself because of the fragmentation in history.

As stated in the novel where a character is being asked “do you miss the country where you were born?” and responded, “I don’t remember the country where I was born,”... “Not being able to talk, having lost all my memories started to hurt” (Tawada, 2024, p. 21) illustrates the idea of identity as a constantly changing and dispersed that has ultimately been constructed by diaspora as well as cultural memories, however resulting in developing sense of displacement. This demonstrates how the loss of memory loss and language can affect the self-concept. This is in line with Stuart Hall's (1990 and 2011) theory that the concept of identity does not have a fixed definition and can change over the context of history and social change and also how we portray it.

Stuart Hall (1990) defines the term "culture" as not an absolute or permanent thing that is based on a common past but instead explains it as a result of individual's "positioning" that evolves through the appearance of conflict as well as changes. Inability of a person to recollect their origins could be a sign of a gap in the time-based continuity of history that is often the basis for the notion of identity. As opposed to the ability to identify oneself through the linear narratives we find in our texts, it's an essay that shows how diaspora identities can be recognized through the absence of memory and memory loss, as well as the reconstruction of their significance in the context of the current. The experience of amnesia felt by the readers symbolically represents diaspora. This is the sense of loss of home, language, and also memories of culture, which generally are linked to the voluntary or forced movement.

The feeling of dislocation which is common between the speaker and Susanoo is another way to illustrate how diaspora may create a shared yet distinct experience. A sense of understanding in the two communities reveals the unspoken and tangible knowledge that has been formed by conflicts between them. According to Hall (2011), identity isn't uniform but is shaped by the differences of languages and races in addition to memories and geographic location. The inability to talk and the stress caused due to lost memories ultimately evoke the emotional and social traumas that can be found in diasporas. Yet, this loss also becomes the ground for new identity formations — constructed not through continuity but through the negotiation of rupture.

Additionally, the language of communication is an important element in identifying the individual. Language is the medium for people to communicate, where as “normal language” possibly suggesting neutrality or imposition of the language of communication as a substitute for a mother language. It is a disconnect of an individual

from their language used as mother tongue that is in accordance with the idea of belonging in Hall as a space that continues to be changing.

The identities that are influenced by diaspora or memories which may become fragmented and difficult to delineate, are fluid in the process of being in a position to lose, recall, and find self-identity again in complicated, emotional, and cultural environments.

In the novel it is stated that “when we try to talk like other people our tongues get in the way, and we can’t make it to the next sound. We stutter, and get stuck... Our language doesn’t have any set rules. Just stick in a rhyme now and then, to make things easier” (Tawada 2024, p. 5) is a clear picture that reveals how the characters of Tawada deal with the effects of displacement on their language and communication while being displaced from their culture in post-national contexts. Based on Stuart Hall's theories defining the importance of culture, this narrative demonstrates the way that language can be used as an instrument of conflict and also an adaptive tool for the negotiation of identity for diasporas.

Stuart Hall (1990, 2011) declares that the identity of our multicultural world does not depend on a specific background or culture; however, it can be affected through diversity, multiculturalism, and a variety of hybrids, as well as the alteration of historic time. The difficult situation of characters to be like other people reflects the diversity of different ethnicities and the established social and cultural practices. Their voices that stutter along with the sensation of feeling of being stuck while communicating with others highlights complex issues other than problems in the ability to speak. They symbolize the fractured self-image that comes in to existence due to being locked between different cultures and languages as well as the past and present.

A post-national world where traditional markers of the nationality of a person, their language, and ethnicity fluctuate, which the Tawada characters are in the middle of. They speak a dialect "without any set rules" implies a disinclination to conform to conventional cultural standards. Instead, they come up with unique ways of communicating . For instance, rhyme. They don't use the language to imitate, but in order to stay alive and also to create sense. Hall (2011) affirms that identities are constructed by the way in which people are depicted, so in this instance, it's an issue that language could be defined as an expressive space, and as the creation of a cultural hybridity.

The dialectic improvisation is another important tenant of Hall's theory of identity which is defined as a "production," not a return to an abandoned soul. The characters do not seek to return to their origins, rather they are actively engaged in creating their identities based on the changes that they've experienced by acknowledging the fragmentation of their relationship to their native language, they are able to revise the limits of their language.

This is why Tawada depicts a culture of dislocation and displacement, not just as a source of disconnection, but as a dynamic space. Utilizing the fragmented language and an expression that's mixed, her characters show how to create the identity of an international diaspora society that is post-national.

The novel narrates, 'when Hiruko talked it sounded like Normal Language, but it was different somehow. Like when I'm sure I can catch something but put out my hand and all I feel is air' (Tawada 2024, p. 17) beautifully and conveys the development of feeling of being alienated from society, as well as the difficulties of encountering an increasingly post-national society.. when we look at Stuart Hall's theories regarding identities and the influence of culture, this narrative provides an insight into the way that how people from Tawada's novel navigate their different identities, which are formed as consequences of hybridity, immigration and as well as the disappearance of any notion of culture.

Stuart Hall (1990) argues that the idea of identity in diasporic or post-national environments isn't an attempt to return to traditional origins; rather, it's a production or a change that's triggered through the displacement of, or break-up of, distinctness. Hiruko's voice, in spite of having a resemblance to "normal language," is said to lack any sensation of being there. The voice does not appear to be fully interspersed, but it does disappear. Similar to Hall's idea that diasporic identity is constantly changing and never been understood or fully recognized.

The idea of reaching out to be within "only air" evokes the burden and affliction of the cultural displacements. Language spoken by the speaker is familiar, but it is not able to be reached. It suggests that the language is not stable or constant and its associated identity is not an unchanging anchor, but instead, it changes as a means for negotiations. This is in line with Hall's (2011) concept that post-national time is a time when identity isn't stable nor uniting but rather created by the richness of a language or history as well as the different cultures.

Hiruko's new style of speech illustrates the larger struggle between the different cultural structures. Even though she is using the well-known "normal language," it isn't entirely hers. Instead, it was altered due to her separation from her. These changes in language are an analogy to the way diaspora communities alter their identities and adjust to new environments. Instead of claiming a distinct style of life, the characters from Tawada make their own versions of hybrids that reflect the diverse nature of their environment.

This also demonstrates that within the post-national framework, it is not simply the geographic or national relocation but also being in a position to bridge the gap in emotions between the common and what is impossible.

The novel depicts that “Our language doesn’t have any set rules. Just stick in a rhyme now and then, to make things easier” (Tawada, 2024, p. 6) It is an illustrative example of the novel's revision of the concept of identity as a fundamentalist idea and belonging. With the development of the novel's unorthodox and flexible system of language, this novel challenges traditional concepts of identity as constant, stable, and being part of the unique national or cultural heritage. In the context of Stuart Hall's notion of identity and culture, this phrase tells a global tale that celebrates the notion of diversity, change, and growth as well as the concept of multiplicity.

The theory suggests that the notion of identity isn't a separate entity free of the influence of culture or tradition; instead, the concept of identity is a "production" that is constantly developing and being defined by the way in which it is represented as well as the differentiation of. The representation of the person speaking a language that is not governed by rules illustrates this concept by the manner in which they speak. In the traditional (essentialist) notion of self-identity. The language can be used to represent belonging to a particular country and also as a way of being a part of it. The language is unique, created with a fun invention—“just include a rhyme every now and then.” This is a departure from the idea of identity being a concept that is handed to a person that is then rebuilt using an inventive method.

The transnational nature of the Tawada story, which spans over borders between various cultures, languages, and linguistic sources, reflects the fractured and evolving characteristics of the developing identity. By rejecting the notion that linguistics is stable, these characters represent Hall's (2011) notion of diaspora. A diaspora isn't a single place of location of origin or home and is defined as a complicated negotiation of intercultural as well as betweenness. In this way, it is no longer a genuine source; it can be seen as an instrument to discover and adapt tools that allow the existence of and self-expression in the post-national society.

Furthermore, the capacity to make rhymes in speech is more than just improving communication because it adds aesthetics, uniqueness, and an underlying rhythm, which could be a reason for angry people. The innovative approach can be a reflection of the long-lasting identities of diaspora communities, which thrive not because they are reliant on the past but by establishing distinct ways of getting around. However, the novel of Tawada challenges the notion of identity as a fundamentalist one, in that it presents a

dynamic worldwide model of self-language, being, and self constantly changing, in constant re-creation and alteration.

The novel contains an exchange “Then maybe your parents were French.” / “My parents?” / “Even you must have had a mother and father. Otherwise, you wouldn’t have been born. They were French but sent you to Denmark to be adopted—that’s one possibility. International adoption” (Tawada, 2024, p. 15) that directly contest the simple concepts of identity and belonging in a way that highlights the uncertainty and variety of our cultural heritage in a global and post-national environment. Through the use of Stuart Hall’s notion of the concept of identity as a social notion, the story demonstrates that the novel is rethinking the idea of a definite country, either biologically or through a culturally linked self.

Identity, as an essentialist notion, is founded on the belief that it has a singular permanent basis for identity that is usually tied to nationality, race, or ethnicity. In this dialogue, however, the speculative tone—“maybe,” “that’s one possibility”—destabilizes the very idea of a knowable, singular origin. This isn’t found in an investigation of the truth but rather is conceived in the complex stories of displacement, in addition to adoption and displacement. As Stuart Hall (1990) asserts, cultural identity is not a static concept as not being something fixed that can’t be discovered, but it’s an ongoing “production” always in process that is formed by the history of the culture of its inhabitants in addition to its power. It is believed that the possibility of an “international adoption” further disrupts notions of national identity by highlighting the diversity and dynamism that are inherent to the lives of transnational citizens.

The plot can also be seen as an imitation of Hall’s (2011) affirmation that the construction of identity depends on the depiction of differences as well. It is impossible for the characters to establish themselves through the imagining of a speculative line of descent. The novel is a way of exposing the limitations of the connection between nations or biological origins in order to reflect the reality. Instead of putting identity into the location where one was born, place it in the story in a way that is diverse, dynamic, and ever-changing. The insanity of a personal history of a person allows for greater examination of the concepts that guide the formation of identities that we have today.

This multinational frame can’t reach a decision or gain the trust that essentialist models require. The concept of identity is the product of many stories that can be told instead of being the absolute truth. Tawada’s study of migration between borders as well as adoption and the disconnect between various cultural traditions reveals the fragmentation and re-invention of identity for diasporas today.

4. Conclusion

Through its fractured characters with a speculative narrative and unclear use of language, *Suggested in the Stars* (2024) offers an incisive critique of traditional notions of identity and belonging. In some ways, it draws on the theories that were developed by Stuart Hall of the concept of cultural identity. This novel is a study of the ways the concept of identity doesn't have an unchanging base from which to explore but is constantly shaped by memories, diaspora, and historic fracture. The characters' dislocation—linguistically, geographically, and emotionally—reflects Hall's concept of identity as "production," constantly positioned and repositioned through representation and difference.

Tawada's multinational novel is devoid of ethnic, national, and social criticism by examining the lives of those who have been displaced due to intercultural fusion and adoption. In the novel, phrases such as "Our language doesn't have any set rules" as well as the speculations on birthplace and parent family tree show how this novel alters the notion of self-identity and opens up potential for diversity through improvisation and reimagining. Language is transformed into a metaphorical space of exchange, which reveals the stress of being separated and also the potential for the diaspora's imagination.

In a nutshell, through this novel, this research explores the notion of belonging in the form of changing stories. This novel does not only portray belonging in the sense of a quest to get back to a previous place, rather as an ongoing process and which constantly is related to the cultures of the past, present and the complicated nature of difference between now and then. In this way, the novel of Tawada highlights the post-national stance on identity and displacement by depicting diaspora in a manner that is divided, multi-faceted, and constantly shifting, and challenging every notion of what constitutes an "us" and what we're supposed to be.

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