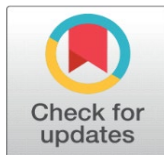


FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES IN BHARTI MUKHERJEE'S NOVELS

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses the view on Feminist Perspectives in Bharti Mukherjee's Novels. During pre-independence number of Indians migrate to colonies of Europe and other countries. Diaspora dream figures are found prominently in all the fiction of Bharati Mukherjee covering many moods of expatriation - nostalgia, uncertainty, frustration and despondency. In her novels, she explores the motif of expatriation, immigration and transformation. The challenges and issues pertaining to South Asian women, especially those in India, are the focus of Third World feminist author Bharti Mukherjee. Like her modern feminist writers, she supports women's rights, but she is different from them in that she focuses on highlighting the issues of cross-cultural conflicts that Indian women immigrants experience. Tara Banerjee in "The Tiger's Daughter," Dimple in "Wife," Jyoti in "Jasmine," the three sisters Tara, Parvati, and Padma in "Desirable Daughters," and Tara in "The Tree Bride" are all examples of this. The heroines of Bharti Mukherjee are fearless and self-assured. They have a tremendous capacity for adaptation; they embrace the harsh realities of their lives and live firmly in reality.

Keywords: Exile, Describe, Frustration, Immigrant, Adaptability, Cultural Elements Etc

1. INTRODUCTION

One of America's most well-known immigrant writers is Bharti Mukherjee, who was born in India. Two groups of immigrant writers can be distinguished in America. First, the "Willing Immigrant Writers" who came to America from Asia and Europe and established themselves there. The second group comprises American-born "Unwilling Immigrant Writers" whose ancestors were transported to the United States during slave voyages. For several reasons, however, Bharti Mukherjee believes that she is distinct from other European authors. The female protagonists of Bharti Mukherjee are immigrants who experience cultural shock, but they are also potential women who are eager to forge their identities via their heroic adventures" In a comparatively short time of only 25 years, Bharti Mukherjee has therefore garnered significant critical attention from practically every corner of the world. Despite being recognized as a "voice of expatriate-immigrants' sensibility," all of her works have a strong feminist bent, as can be seen by closely examining them. Since Bharti Mukherjee's female characters suffer from immigration, all of her critics focus on the issues and repercussions of immigration, but in reality, the issues are not because the characters are immigrants, but rather because they struggle for their rights as women and then as individuals. In order to maximize each person's creative potential as an individual rather than using gender binary thinking, Bharti Mukherjee has attempted to establish a new connection between men and women that is founded on equality, non-oppression, and non-exploitation. As a symbol of patriarchal culture, the male has finally been pushed out of the focus of women's attraction. Beyond the fullness of patriarchy, the woman is now getting ready to be her own pull. Let's look at Bharti Mukherjee's novels based on their ideas.

2. IDENTITY – SIGNIFICANT FIGURE IN DIASPORIC LITERATURE

Identity is a significant figure in diasporic literature. Diasporic. Indian Diasporic literature is the result of colonization and decolonization, the period in Indian history in which many Indian people migrated to other countries either through colonization or by their need for work.

This feeling of lack of identity gets classical expression in the diasporic literature of the period. So many writers like V. S. Naipaul, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, Salman Rushdie, Arvind Adiga and others have expressed the feelings of rootlessness in the countries to which they migrated, where they were treated as 'others'. They have discussed the issues of globalization, consumerism, cultural hybridity, alienation, and identity crisis faced by the individuals. Their works focus on the dislocated self, which desires to search for home and identity in transnational and trans-cultural situations. Diasporic dream figures are found prominently in all the fiction of Bharati Mukherjee covering many moods of expatriation - nostalgia, frustration, uncertainty and despondency. Bharati Mukherjee is one of the most celebrated writers of the Asian immigrants' experience in America.

3. MOTIF OF EXILE, IMMIGRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

In her novels, Bharati Mukherjee explores the theme of expatriation, immigration and transformation. Her creative works comprise six novels *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971), *Wife* (1975), *Jasmine* (1989), *The Holder of the World* (1993), *Leave It to Me* (1997), *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and *The Tree Bride* (2004). Her latest novel is *Miss New India* (2011). Her two collections of short stories are *Darkness* (1985) and *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988).

3.1. THE TIGER'S DAUGHTER

Mukherjee's novel *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972) is a fine presentation of cultural conflict. It was conceived in a very difficult phase of her life when she was struggling to determine her own identity in the Indian heritage. *The Tiger's Daughter* runs parallel to Bharati Mukherjee's own experience when she returned to India with her Canadian husband, Clark Blaise in 1973. In this novel, she feels a special oneness with India. It deals with the problems of immigrants.

The protagonist of the novel, Tara Banerjee Cartright is an autobiographical presentation of Mukherjee. There is a strange fusion of the Americanness and the Indianness in the psyche of Tara. She can take refuge neither in her old Indian self nor in the newly discovered American self. The novel is divided into four parts. Part I deals with the part of Tara, her family background, and the process of her settlement in New York; Part II deals with Tara's arrival at Bombay, her journey to Calcutta, and her reaction to India; Part III concentrates on Tara's life at Calcutta and her Catelli-continental friends; Part IV of the novel deals with her visit to Darjeeling with her friends to spend summer vacation, her coming back to Calcutta, her boredom and alienation, her victimization in a mob, and her tragic end which remains mysterious.

Tara Banerjee, the main character in Bharti Mukherjee's debut book "*The Tiger's Daughter*," returns to India after living in America for seven years. The narrative is based on Mukherjee's personal experience as well as those of her sisters who studied in America. Tara feels uneasy with her family as she lands at Bombay airport. In this case, Tara's Bombay family are unable to accept a lady who is not with her husband, David. Indian custom dictates that a male should guide a lady. He acts as a guardian. In many parts of India, living alone, traveling alone, and relocating alone are all considered unusual. According to Indian custom, a person should wed within their own caste. Anybody who marries someone from a different caste will be viewed as a sinner or an outcast. However, the main character Tara breaks these laws by getting married to a foreigner who is Jewish. Through numerous marriages, she completely forgets her faith and caste. Ironically, Mukherjee criticizes the rigid mindset of Indians who are obsessed with foreign fashion and items but do not appear to be open to marrying foreigners. Tara feels isolated when her mother is there. Tara has mental instability and decides to return to the United States. Thus, Tara's sense of estrangement may be found in the first book.

3.2. WIFE

The central character of this fictional write-up of Bharati Mukherjee '*Wife*' is Dimple. Dimple, a supposedly submissive young Bengali girl, is the protagonist of this book. Like any other girl, she has many fantasies about her married life and nervously and eagerly awaits marriage. Amit Basu is her spouse. She imagines herself starting over in

America, where Amit plans to immigrate. Mukherjee presents this character of 'Wife' in such a way that the reader is left wondering about the attitude that he or she develops towards her. Mukherjee takes us deep into the mind of Dimple as she makes a transition from being single to marrying a husband chosen by her father. It also depicts the transitional situation of living in the familiar surroundings of Calcutta to moving to the so-perceived violent city of New York. As the novel progresses, Dimple's hidden unstable personality reveals itself leaving the reader shocked yet filled with wonder and delight. The protagonist 'Dimple' is characterized as a young, naive Indian woman, who tries to reconcile the Bengali ideal of the perfect, passive wife with the demands of her new American life. In this story Dimple lacks the inner strength and resources it takes to cope in New York City as the young wife in an arranged marriage. Again, in this novel, Mukherjee deals with the complications that come from being thrown between two worlds and the strength and courage it takes to survive and, in the end, live. This story reflects the author's mental status in many of its parts. At the end of the story being suppressed by such men and attempts to be the ideal Bengali wife she becomes frustrated and out of fear and personal instability she ultimately murders her husband and eventually commits suicide. The main character depicted in 'Wife' is regarded as a weak one as she fails to make the transition from one world to another.

Dimple, the main character in her second book "Wife" aspires to overcome the customary taboos associated with becoming a wife. She is supposed to stay at home, take care of the house for her husband, and act like the perfect Indian wife. The situation increasingly exacerbates her annoyance. According to feminist perspectives, she resists against wifehood and dislikes being the wife in the Basu family. In many respects, Bharti Mukherjee's novel. She views her pregnancy as a Basu's property even while she is still in the womb, therefore one way she does this is to skip her pregnancy and cause a miscarriage. But marriage keeps her identity hidden. Self-awareness and dream fulfillment are among her objectives. But Basu behaves in a different way. He desires her to be obedient and subservient. For this reason, Dimple hates Basu and what he does. He needs her only because of sexual harassment. She feels a little bad about it. She kills Amit while mentally unwell and then commits suicide as a last gesture of self-liberation.

3.3. JASMINE

Mukherjee's novel *Jasmine* (1988) reveals a more positivistic approach to the problem of immigration. The narrative shuttles between past and present, between India of the narrator's early life, and America of her present one. Jasmine is a giver. She is a vital, life-giving force to Bud, Taylor, Duff and Du - they all love her and depend on her. She learns how to reinvent both herself and the American dream. The novel begins with the retelling of a story from her childhood about an astrologer who predicts her future as a widower living in exile.

It tells the tale of Jyoti, a rural Punjabi girl. Jyoti's husband, Prakash, is a young man full of energy and enthusiasm. She exclaims, "I'll go with you and if you leave me, I'll jump into a well," as Prakash gets ready to travel to America. A woman must accept her husband's path. Renamed Jasmine, she eagerly shares her husband's aim and anticipates traveling to America, a country full of opportunity. Even this dream is dashed when Prakash is killed the night before he leaves. In order to fulfill Prakash's objective and perform "Sati," she chooses to travel to America.

Jasmine continues with Prakash's plans to move to Florida, travelling by plane, train, and ship. Half-Face, the captain of the ship drives Jasmine to a motel when they arrive to land. He then sexually assaults her. She burns Prakash's suit that she carried with her and leaves the motel. Jasmine meets Lillian Gordon, who takes her in. Mrs. Gordon is also housing three Kanjobal women. For five months, Jasmine lives with Professor Vadhera, whom she calls Professorji. She becomes depressed because she has qualms, hesitating to leave the house without a green card. Professorji agrees to get her a green card, for fifty thousand rupees, or three thousand dollars.

Jasmine begins working for Wylie and Taylor Hayes, friends of Kate Gordon-Feldstein. She moves in with them in Manhattan to take care of their adopted daughter, Duff. Taylor calls her "Jase." Wylie falls out of love with Taylor and falls for Stuart. Wylie leaves Taylor, but Jase continues to take care of Duff. She falls in love with Taylor, but one day while the three of them are at the park, Jase spots Sukhwinder, the man that killed Prakash. She flees from New York to Iowa. She chose Iowa because Duff's birth mother lives in Iowa.

Now that she knows how to "Walk and Talk" like an American, she seizes any chance to blend in. Jase is born from Jasmine. She ultimately murders the Khalsa lion who killed Prakash, Sukhawinder. She then moves to Iowa and adopts the new name "Jase." Jasmine's many roles and personalities as Jase and Jase assault the power of women. This ability is comparable to Sakti, the mastery of quality that vanquishes and combats all evils. Jasmine has liberated herself from the

constraints of gender, caste, and family. She's learned to live for herself, not for her spouse or kids. Jasmine is a fighter, adapter, and survivor. She overcomes unfavorable conditions, succeeds, and establishes a new life in a foreign nation.

4. THE HOLDER OF THE WORLD

'The Holder of the World' Bharti Mukherjee's follow-up book, reiterates expatriation as a mental journey. Similar to Jasmine's journey west, Hannah Estean's "Voyage to the Orient" reveals the protagonist's most recent conflicts, desires, and goals. Born in Massachusetts, Hannah visits India. Following her involvement with a few Indian lovers, she eventually receives a diamond known as the "Emperor's Tear" from a king. The narrative is told from Hannah's point of view and the detective's search for the diamond. The female hero's physical journey not only prompts self-examination but also helps her see her own side. She returns to her homeland as a rebel living on the outskirts of America rather than as a changed American.

5. DESIRABLE DAUGHTERS

Desirable Daughters Bharti Mukherjee's most recent book tells the story of immigrants and three sisters' attitudes and coping mechanisms. As the term implies, "desirable daughters" are the kind of daughters that every father would want and be proud of. The three sisters come from a typical Bengali Brahmin family; they are the great-granddaughters of Jai Krishna Gangooli and the daughters of Motilal Bhattacharya. Although they don't exhibit some moral qualities, Padma, Parvati, and Tara—symbolic names for Shakti, the Hindu goddess—have the perseverance to make a place for themselves. They combine a classic and contemporary perspective. Neither Padma nor Parvati regret their decisions; the former is an ethnic immigrant from New Jersey, while the latter married a lad of her choosing and settled in the affluent neighborhood of Bombay with the help of servants. The novel's narrator, Tara, enters into an arranged marriage with Bishwapriya Chatterjee. After Tara leaves her traditional life because she feels her marriage is unfulfilling, a standard American divorce settlement is reached. Tara volunteers at a daycare center. She and Andy have a happy romantic relationship. As part of the terms of their divorce, Tara sends his son along with his father. Her identity's flexibility attests to both his and the immigrants' flexibility. Finally, Tara seeks comfort in her father's home. The autobiography of Bharti Mukherjee, who has two sisters, appears to be a part of this book.

The final work of Bharti Mukherjee is titled "The Tree Bride." Here, the "root-search" connects the events of Tara's life with those of her "desirable daughters" in the past. The pursuit of her stalker's identity results in a number of disclosures. "The Tree Bird's" storyline alternates between colonial India in the years before independence, San Francisco, and back.

6. CONCLUSION

By analyzing the novels of Bharati Mukharjee, one can understand how the first-generation immigrant suffers in an alien country. Jasmine has achieved a proper identity and balance between tradition and modernity in the concluding part of the novel. The ending of the novels is used as a paradigm to question and discover – rediscover the new ways of defining reality in a world standing on the brink of the glorious mountain consisting of cash and pebbles. Given their personal experiences of displacement and dislocation, women are better equipped to adjust to a foreign culture. When one closely examines Mukherjee's novels, it becomes clear that her main goal is to support women's rights. Though they tell intricate stories, Mukherjee's early works lack the craft of narrative. However, her later works do a better job of drawing readers in. Bharti Mukherjee is a typical feminist author as a result. Her books accurately capture the tone and ethos of the culture she was a part of.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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