

## PARADIGM OF EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL AGONY OF DIASPORA

**Ms. Anju Sehrawat**

(Assistant Professor), Dept. of English

D. A. V. Centenary College, Faridabad (Haryana), India

**Abstract :** Diaspora is the migration of people from their homeland. It can be forced or voluntary. Diaspora plays an important part in our human civilization. These Diaspora people have developed their own communities and have a different world of their own. Study of diaspora give us a chance to study life of them from their perspective as how they all share a common bond between them. Indian diaspora has also played a considerable role in world literature. These diasporic writers of India lives in other countries. Diasporic writers of India have helped in giving expression to our indian culture and Bharti Mukherjee is one of them. Her place is among the great diasporic writers like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Jhumpa Lahiri etc. Literature is also a great medium of expression of female voice and it gives voice to their sufferings, predicaments. Bharti Mukherjee in her novel Jasmine uses the voice of her protagonist to express the pitiable plight of a female. In this novel jasmine went to America as an illegal immigrant and there she went through many transformations and finally regenerate herself.

**Key words :** Migration, Diaspora, immigrants, transformation, regeneration, assimilation, and disintegration

### Introduction

The term 'diaspora' was first used for the Jews who were sent to exile by force to Babylonia. But today its meaning has changed and it is used for every sizeable community which has moved from their own country or nation to other regions outside their countries. Diasporic people share a common bond and that helps them in giving them an identity of their own. The term diasporas has different meaning to different generation of people as for the very first generation they have a special bond and attachment to their origin country but the next generation developed feelings for their adopted country and they start developing the feelings that their adopted country is their own. Diasporic people from a particular country do not exhibit any fixed uniformity or we can say unity but the culture of the host country and their origin country gets really affected by the foreign people coming in their

country differentiates themselves from the host country in the way they dress themselves, the language they speak, the customs and rituals, the religion etc are some of the elements that underwent changes and sometimes gets mixed up with the host country and regenerates a new one. But the question is What effect have diaspora on Indian women? The place of Indian woman in fiction writing is tectonic one. This paper discusses how the Indian woman embellishes facts and presents the dark and unexpected corners of reality. Sensibility of Indian woman in fiction unfolds the layers describing nostalgia, quest for homeland and identity. These women are under constant psychic struggle for infatuation of their homeland and the new life and identity given to them by the host country.

Bharti Mukherjee in her novel 'Jasmine' tells the story of a peasant woman that how her life changes from a small village of Punjab to

Florida, to New York, to Iowa and finally at the end she set off to California. This is the story of transformation, disintegration and then transformation. The journey of the protagonist starts from Jyoti the village girl from Hasanpur and then she changes herself into Jasmine the girl from city. Then her make over into Jazzy an immigrant, to Jase and then to Jane. The protagonist's change of roles and her identity is constant metamorphose in this novel. In India her life as Jyoti and Jasmine shows the patriarchal system of our society in India and shows how rigid it is but when she moves to America she self-realized herself as Jaya at the end of the novel. That Long Silence realizes herself. Her relationships with Bud, Taylor, and Du shows her freedom from the barriers of patriarchy which she faced in India. But her husband in India was the first who helps in initiating her transformation from Jyoti. All the transformations which she went through in her life transforms her in a new world.

#### Material and Methods:

Material were collected from different book sources and assess the different online journal like, Google scholar, pub med, and others search engine. After searching compiled all the information and presented here.

#### Results and Discussion :

##### A Rebel from birth

From childhood Jyoti was a rebel child and she doesn't believe in blind beliefs and superstitions. As we can see early in the novel she raise against the words spoken by the astrologer.

"Fate is Fate. When Behula's bridegroom was fated to die of snakebite on their wedding night, did building a steel fortress prevent his health? A magic snake will penetrate solid walls when necessary (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 2)"

Break from Traditional beliefs and Superstition  
Jyoti chooses Prakash as her husband as he was an educated and intelligent man and she wants to break from the usual traditions

prevalent in Indian society. Prakash turns her from Jyoti to Jasmine. He was an educated man and nurture her instead of suppressing her. She said,

"Pygmalion wasn't a play I'd seen then, but realize now how much of professor Higgins there was in my husband. He wanted to break down the Jyoti I'd been in Hasanpur and made me a new kind of city woman. (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 77)"

She was very happy with Prakash but her happiness was short-lived as unfortunately her husband died in a bomb explosion and all her dreams shattered into pieces. She was just seventeen at that time and was planning a new life in America with her husband but grief-stricken her after his death.

"There is no dying, there is only an ascending or a descending, a moving on to other planes. Don't crawl back to Hasanpur and feudalism. That Jyoti is dead (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 86)"

#### A series of Metamorphoses

Her journey of transformation starts with her husband but after his death she doesn't succumb to fate and set off to America to fulfill Prakash's dreams. Her brothers helped her in going there but her documents were forged.

"Prakash had taken Jyoti and created Jasmine, and Jasmine would complete the mission of Prakash (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 63) "

#### Brutal Raping

Jasmine's adventurous journey turns into a nightmare when she arrives in a foreignland. She experiences there a series of shattering experiences. She was brutally raped by Half-face who was the captain of the trawler in a motel.

Half-face had "lost an eye and ear and most of his cheek in a paddy field in Vietnam." (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 104).

This incident totally shattered her and she plans to commit suicide. But at the same time American life and outlook redeem her and regenerate her spirits to emerge like Indian

Goddess 'Kali' to eradicate evil from society. This transformation of Jasmine is from victim into a revengeful goddess like Kali. Now she wants to survive and she was also surprised at her own desire and decision. Now she walks through the American streets with more confidence.

"With the first streaks of dawn, my first American day, I walked out at the front drive of the motel to the highway and begin my journey, travelling light." (Mukherjee, Jasmine: 121)

Her mission to fulfill the wishes of Prakash is now abandoned. Now her Indian identity is discarded and she is reborn in America as Jase and Jane. In this novel, Jasmine is reborn several times and her new births are not always constructive but she faces much destruction inside herself.

#### Transformation

Disintegration, violence and destruction are associated with her each new transformation. At Hasanpur her father was gored to death by a bull and Masterji was killed by the terrorists. Next incident that broke her into pieces was the death of her husband. He was killed by Sukhwinder in a bomb blast. Then when she goes to America to fulfill her husband's wishes, she was brutally raped by Half-face and whom she finally kills. And when she was living as Jase with Taylor she met Sukhwinder Singh who reminds her of the bomb blast in which her husband had died. This is not the end to her sufferings when she was living with Bud and was happy with him then Bud was seriously injured in a shooting incident and his legs got paralyzed. Every transformation of Jasmine is associated with her psychic disintegration and were full of agony.

#### A New Identity

In every situation she creates a new identity for herself in which the sorrow and agony of the former life are not erased fully. But the ache of her former life emerges out at specific points. She says,

"In United state of America nothing last, I can say that now and it doesn't shock me, but I think it was the hardest lesson of all for me to learn. We arrive so eager to learn, to adjust, to participate, only to find the monuments are plastic, agreements are annulled. Nothing is forever, nothing is so terrible, or so wonderful, that it won't disintegrate (Mukherjee 1989)"

#### Assimilation

The protagonist of the novel Jasmine is an Indian immigrant and her encounter with the entirely new place and a new world. Her journey into a foreign land leads to her many transformations. When she was in Manhattan she learns the American way of life as how a husband helps his wife in household chores and how a wife works outside for longer time. She also learns there that if any couple does not have a natural child they can adopt a child. These things made her admire the American way of life. When she learns that Duff is not a natural child but an adopted one her reaction was

"I could not imagine a non-genetic child; adoption was foreign to me as the idea of widow remarriage (Jas-170).

She was impressed by the democratic thoughts of American people and their respect even for the menial jobs. Despite of facing so many problems she gradually assimilated in new atmosphere of America.

The interaction between two cultures leads to a gradual transformation in the protagonist: She walks American; she dresses American. She says; in this apartment of artificially maintained Indianans, I wanted to distance myself from everything Indian, everything Jyoti-like (Jas - 145)

#### Jasmine's Valiant Spirit

Her undaunted spirit to accept whatever situation comes in her life and to survive and fight every situation made her a valiant girl. She said,

"I Survived the sniping. My grandmother may have named me Jyoti, Light, but in surviving I

was already Jane, a fighter and adapter”(Mukherjee ,Jasmine:40).No doubt she undergoes many transformations and born into a new identity every time but she was still in dilemma of her actual existence.

Searching the Rootless

The whole struggle of Jasmine in Bharti Mukherjee’s novel represent the restless search of rootless person. And she felt a depressing and rootless isolation all around. She swings around one state of insecurity to another .

I feel like at times like a stone hurtling through diaphanous mist , unable to grab hold, unable to solve myself,yet unwilling to abandon the ride I’m on. Down and down I go, where I’ll stop, God only knows(Mukherjee,Jasmine:139).

Disruption, change and survival

Jasmine’s life was not a stable one.Disruption, change and then survival are the parts of her life. After every destruction she transforms into a new identity. But her every transformation satisfies her inner self. Her transformation from rustic to modern life satisfied her inner self. All these transformations and a new identity shows that the protagonist is a brave girl.Bharti Mukherjee ends this novel with a thoughtful note

Then there nothing I can do. Time will tell if I am tornado, rubber maker arising from nowhere and disappearing into a cloud. I am out the door and in the potholed and rutted driveway, scrambling ahead of Taylor, greedy with wants and reckless hope(Mukherjee,Jasmine:241).

Conclusion

The purpose of this purpose is to discuss how the protagonist after so many transformations achieved through so many sufferings comes out to be a winner in her ownself.Bharti Mukherjee in a way celebrates the victory and winner spirit of a woman even after facing so many problems.The novel is written on the background of nineteenth century and at that time a female is treated subservient to male and this novel brings to light the sufferings and hard life of females. In a way this novel explores the female strength to fight and adapt to new surroundings and new environmental the transformations and changes the protagonist went through were full of violence and disintegration and that affected her in all aspects such as emotionally and physically. The story of Jasmine is an inspiration for the girls who lives in rural areas that despite of so many difficulties a girl can move forward in her life.

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