

# Diasporic Consciousness in Desirable Daughters by Bharati Mukherjee

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**Abstract – Bharati Mukherjee is an Indian born American novelist. Mukherjee's novels are essential to the question of mutilation of the self, eagerness of migration, wistfulness for lost home. Desirable Daughters, explores how Tara reunites with her home family community and tradition in the way of quest of self contrast society, self-finding.**

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## INTRODUCTION

Desirable Daughters is the story of three sisters "Sister's there are we... as like as blossom a tree. But we are not..." (Mukherjee, 2002:21). After the wedding of the Tree bride Tara Lata after a period of eighty years, Padma was born and after an interval of three years each the two younger sisters Parvati and Tara were born. Padma in New York, Tara in San Francisco and Parvati in Bombay were settled in their various careers. Padma Mehta a T.V. Personality, Parvati a housewife in the household of a corporate magnet, a divorcee of Bishwapriya – Bish- her San Francisco with her son Rabi and her "live in partner", Andy, the Hungarian "retrofit biker". Their Indian roots are clearly mentioned and that indicates their belonging to the old traditional social life in the Indian culture.

In the opening scene of the novel, a rich man's youngest daughter is shown in a palanquin borne by four servants. The bride name is Tara Lata. Tara Lata Ganguly (1874-1944), known to the world as Tara Ma, resided as a untrained nurse, spiritual healer. The town and the outlying villages during the Bengal Famine of 1942.

The novel discusses various traits of eastern culture in its opening chapters how eastern cultural traits like propitiating Goddess Manasha, pre wedding religious rites, dowry system, moral and ethical codes, human values and social manners. One can relate it to the superstitious mindsets of people, when Goddess Manasha was propitiated, how could the bride groom pass away on the very day of his marriage. Surenderanath Lahiri, still holding the body of his sons in his arms demanded the dowry gifts represents the trap in which Eastern people are caught. The daughter's true fate had revealed: a lifetime's virginity, a life without a husband to worship as God's proxy on earth and thus the despairing life of a woman deemed to be reincarnated. The father

turned his back on them and declared "I will see my daughter married to a crocodile, to a tree before you get a single pice" (Mukherjee, 2002:21). Tara's Californian friends suggested that existence in Calcutta was like living on an unearthly place. The city had negative connotations all over the world.

The three sisters were living on the Ballygang Park Road. Their residential area proclaimed that they status from the old customary Indian culture of traditional rituals, old world charms and moral and ethical code of great social manners and human values. Tara's second sister Parvati who married her love Aurobindo Banerjee lived in a high rise building on the Marine drive in Bombay. The luxurious apartment, with a monthly rent of twenty five thousand US Dollars and the fishermen's colony of tents below, the poverty stricken slum below and the skyscrapers looking the sea presented the two sides of Indian life-the opulent and the deprived –the high and the low- the contrasting opposites co-existing in Indian the orient.

Tara explains how her mother used to make entry of each shirt, sari, a pair of underwear. I have lost my Indian radar. My mother used to enter in her little laundry books every spirit ...and check them...The elaborate counting and checking was the final act ...in a...drama ending in payment. It was not distrust at all. It was a part of growing up. Tara also explains how her father too made additions to check the bills at the counter of each shop. One can call it a culture of vigilance, caution way of thinking and conducting business,

When Tara's sister Padma took her to a jewelry shop and there she met Mr. Bose. He must have been a practitioner of yoga Exercises. The yogic exercises and the sparse diet made him move like a bird. His balanced view point indicates the way of Indian life style shapes the physical and

psychological well-being of and individual. The advantage of Indian way of life is clearly indicated as the reflection the culture of the east. Tara explains how her father led a moderated life in Rishikesh. He maintained his daily routine observing the regular rituals and his spiritual meditations. This is the result of the disciplined systematization. Of life in the third stage –in an Indian life styleandin the same manner in New YORK too.

Tara's grandmother 'Didima' was the first girl in her family who went to school. She considered herself quite a modern woman. This marks a change in the life style of Indians, as female education continued to spread among the educated families.

## CONCLUSION

The aforementioned examples also highlight the different ways in which societies are organized in India and in America. In India, one's happiness totally depends upon other, one is subordinated. It is expected that role of the woman is to be supportive to their husband in all circumstances. but, the three sisters does not allow themselves to be subordinated by this primitive culture. Tara and Padma both have become assimilated in the American culture. The stages of alienation from the native culture and the stages of getting assimilated in other culture have been noticed.

## REFERENCES

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