

Marginalisation and Portrayal of Women Characters in Indian Diasporic Writings: A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri and Bharati Mukherjee

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Abstract- Most authors of post-colonial diasporic origin tend to write in a formulaic fashion. Inviting readers from all over the world, they use methods as varied as stream of consciousness, immigration, magic realism, alienation, and the capacity to adjust to a new area and culture. The literary world has taken notice of Indian literature in English because of the depth and relevance of its subject matter. The contemporary trend in Indian writing in English is unparalleled, despite the fact that outstanding literary works written in English were discovered a century ago. Numerous authors have gained widespread recognition on both a national and international scale. Some of the most well-known Indian authors of the modern era did not even grow up in India. Modern Indian English literature found a strong ally in India's female authors. They have shed light on many of the ongoing problems that women have had to deal with for centuries. Women who have stepped out to demonstrate their efficacy in numerous fields have been met with resistance from patriarchal culture. An identity crisis does not arise from one specific event or cause. A person's identity crisis may have been brought on by a number of different things.

Keywords - Marginalization, Portrayal, Women, Character, Indian, Diasporic

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INTRODUCTION

The Greek root of the English word "diaspora" means "to scatter." The term "diaspora" refers to the movement of people from one cultural area to another. In diasporic writing, there are two major developments. Both Temporal Move and Spatial Move are possible. The Temporal Shift involves analepsis, or a consideration of the past, and prolepsis, or consideration of the future. Deterritorialization, or the elimination of territory, is one part of The Spatial Move, while Reterritorialization, or the addition of territory, is the other. Therefore, the novel of the diaspora requires movement over space, between the home nation and the strangers, the known and the unknown, the traditional and the modern. Novels, short tales, travelogues, poetry, and prose by people of the diaspora have a long history in postcolonial literature. So-called "diaspora literature" emerged out of people with an unusually strong commitment to their birthplace, culture, religion, and language. The works of Indian diaspora authors have been more renowned during the last decade. The Indian diaspora is the biggest in terms of population after the Chinese diaspora. There are almost 25 million people in the diaspora, and they have settled in every major city on every continent.

Women have been doing their part to preserve cultural traditions inside the home since the birth of human

civilisation. There is an ongoing fight for women's liberation from patriarchal social structures and male dominance. In light of this, many female authors are addressing themes specific to women. The authors are creating a "literature of their own," transcending barriers of ethnicity, religion, and more. Many female authors mirror the sentiment of "disappointment towards the dominance of the masculine world" in their work. They have brought attention to the experience of exclusion and spoken out against the social standards that the macho society has imposed. Many modern female authors are concerned with drawing attention to the difficulties women face and the ways in which they are exploited economically, emotionally, and physically. Women's emotional suffering inside households and across society as a whole has also been a primary focus.

Many people regard the fight for women's equal political, economic, and social rights to be at the heart of the feminist movement. Equal educational and occupational possibilities for women is another goal of feminism. A true feminist is one who fights for women's rights and equality. Feminism is the belief that individuals of all sexes, races, sexual orientations, and nationalities should be afforded the same legal protections, economic opportunities, and social privileges. Feminism is a social movement

that advocates for the equitable treatment of women and men in all aspects of society.

JHUMPA LAHIRI'S INTERPRETER OF MALADIES, UNACUSTOMED EARTH, AND THE NAMESAKE: PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN CHARACTERS

Jhumpa Lahiri is one of the rare authors who write about people in the East from a Western perspective. Her stories often center on Indian immigrants of the first and second generations who have settled in the United States or Western Europe. According to an interview Deepika Bahri gave to *The Hindu*, Lahiri's literature gives her characters and their stories credit because she respects their diversity. Lahiri's writing is characterized by its diversity because of her interest in contrasts. The majority of her protagonists are of Indian descent, and she makes her effort to ground them in Indian culture and customs even when they are set in other countries. If Mrs. Sen ('Mrs. Sen's') is of Indian Bengali descent, she would likely wear a silk saree and specialize in a certain cuisine.

It is easier for western women to portray themselves as educated, contemporary, and in charge of their own bodies and "sexualities" if they can portray the ordinary woman in the developing world as illiterate, tradition-bound, and victimized, as Chandra Talpade Mohanty argues. Lahiri confronts all of them by recasting eastern and western women as psychological beings, exposing their inner thoughts and motivations for the first time. Aparna, the wife, tries to kill herself in 'Hell-Heaven' because she feels like an outsider in her own home. Aparna and the other women characters in Lahiri's works appear to be miserable not because their husbands beat them with slippers or make the wife worship them, but rather because they are outcasts both in the white community and within their own families.

Jhumpa Lahiri's Women from Feminist Viewpoint

Jhumpa Lahiri, like Nandini Bhadra, adopts new methods to improve her diasporic writing by engaging in transnational, postcolonial, and intercultural research. She is one of the leading female authors in the field of realist storytelling. There has been a surge in the number of tales written by diaspora women authors who focus on feminist literature. In the literature of the Diaspora, women have always been the focus of tragedy. These authors from the Diaspora explore the plight of women in their works via a wide range of tones and perspectives. The plight of Indian women immigrants in other nations is clearly shown in the literature of Jhumpa Lahiri, a writer of the Indian diaspora. Her female protagonists suffer the most as a result of losing their individuality in a country that has been claimed by their husbands. Immigrant life is difficult for her female citizens in other countries. Because of this, people honor their ancestors by wearing traditional clothing and adhering to their cultural practices. Most of the women in the story are housewives who never go anywhere except to do housework.

Women's traditional duties in society, such as childbearing, housework, and service to spouse and family, persist even after migration. Due to their invisibility, they continue to be treated as subservient, dependent, and mistreated women. "For immigrants, the challenges of exile, the loneliness, the constant sense of alienation, and the knowledge of longing for the lost world are more explicit and distressing than for their children," in the words of Lahiri. (Arun Aguiar Speaks with Author Jhumpa Lahiri) Concerned with how globalization impacts individuals of different nations, racial and ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, and sexual orientations is at the heart of global feminism and transnational feminism. The professional feminism of developing nations reduces the time and energy migrant mothers can devote to caring for their children. Demand from throughout the world necessitates the outsourcing of the labor of certain women. They are able to operate across boundaries, but their feeling of power causes them to mistreat their spouses and discriminate against women. Wartime labor shortages in the United States provide women with a chance to enter the workforce. They are liberated from stereotypical gender stereotypes because of their economic independence. In third-world feminism, where the emphasis is on the patriarchal oppression that confines women to the home and conventional roles, women are liberated from the domestic suffrage. Liberal feminism aims to free women from the constraints of patriarchal gender roles by encouraging them to pursue higher education, find gainful employment, and develop a strong sense of identity and community.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED NOVELS BY BHARTI MUKHERJEE: MARGINALISATION IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN DIASPORIC LITERATURE

Bharti Mukherjee is another multifaceted writer from the literature of the diaspora, whose works are a synonym of sensitivity and express characters intellectually by tackling the challenges of migration and adaptation. Mukherjee is a migrant who has lived in a variety of cultural settings, and the experiences she has had there have given her the energy to fictionalize the plight of migrants and the marginalisation they face in both their native and adopted countries. Her experiences as a migrant in India, Canada, and the United States allowed her to accurately portray their plight. To use her own words, "Stories of broken identities and discarded languages," describes the themes that run through her writings. In her works, she presents herself as having gone through the same kind of identity shift that she discusses.

Jasmine, by Bharati Mukherjee, is one of her most well-known books. The novel's heroine, an intrepid young lady from the hamlet of Hasnapur who moves to America, has an identity crisis, experiences marginalisation, and overcomes adversity to emerge as a powerful woman. This tale shows how her many

identities change and intertwine as she moves through her present and her past. The narrative builds to a dramatic climax, revealing her fundamental transformation as she experiences discrimination at the hands of her own people and in a strange place. After marrying Prakash, who gives her the name Jasmine out of pure devotion, Jyoti undergoes a profound identity shift. Author Bharati Mukherjee uses the work to discuss issues of exclusion and self-definition.

We've been cast out of society and banished from our homes; we've landed at the very end of tarmacs, been ferried in old army trucks where we've been roughly handled, and been ushered to a corner of waiting rooms where surly, barely awake customs guards wait for their bribe. We are clad in the tattered remnants of foreign attire, worn long after their appropriate seasons have passed. We have just one request: please let us land, proceed, etc. Unbeknownst to the tour groups, we check out the main exit. Our urban centers and ultimate goals are both within striking distance, but not quite yet. We'll have to sneak in, landing only at night on unused stretches of land... To what nation do you refer? On which continent are we looking? Wars and pandemics are things that we must endure. I really need to get caught up on the news, but the papers lying around are written in a language I don't know. (Jasmine-101)

It's really sad that she refused to accept her destiny after being brutally raped by Half Face shortly after arriving in America. It may be argued that the burning of her husband's outfit at the hotel represents the constraints she feels imposed by social norms and conventions. Her unsteady existence may be attributed to the marginalisation she has experienced in a new nation. She has come to use it in every aspect of her life. Mukherjee has created a local hero who teaches people everywhere how to fight back against adversity and go on with their lives.

Cultural Ideology and Social Construction

The value of one's identity cannot be overstated. Everyone has to work hard to establish or discover who they are. Another meaning of the term "identity" is our very being. To begin, it is not an easy thing to pin down one's identity. The idea of identity is not abstract. It may change with time and with different cultures. Reading the works of women's rights advocates from India who have lived and worked abroad is essential when discussing women's identities. Both "*Wife*" and "*Jasmine*," two of Bharati Mukherjee's most acclaimed books, center on female protagonists grappling with questions of self-definition. She has done extensive research on the warped minds of immigrant women torn between Indian culture and Western ideals. Mukherjee delves deep into her writing to explore the layered personalities of her characters. Her writings

are taking the place of identity politics. Her books *Wife* and *Jasmine* explore the mutable identities of a diasporic woman over time and space, from modern-day Canada and India to the United States and classic works of literature. When thinking about American society, the word "wife" works well to describe seemingly unrelated puzzles. The tale vividly illustrates the far-reaching effects of cultural conflicts. It demonstrates how intercultural encounters may push a person's life to the brink of disaster. The story also explores how exposure to other cultures may alter an individual's sense of who they are as a man or a woman.

People nowadays leave their homelands in quest of greater chances elsewhere. Migrants face a wide range of difficulties as a result of their journeys. In today's interconnected world, it's crucial that young people learn about the challenges associated with international relocation. Migrant women have more challenges than males due to cultural norms that place them at a disadvantage. It is especially challenging for female immigrants to acclimatize to life in a new nation because of the cultural, moral, and religious expectations they carried with them from their home countries. When it comes to discussing the issues facing women migrants, there is no more reliable source than the literature of the diaspora. From its earliest iteration, the Indian English novel presents the cultural confrontation with the Westerners as a driving force behind Indian Writing in English. The present Diasporic Indian English authors captivate readers throughout the world because they evoke the colonial legacy in modern society via the lens of a similar theme: cultural conflict. Several Indian Diaspora women authors depict the difficulties faced by immigrant women while adjusting to their new home.

CONCLUSION

We can say that a comprehensive and extensive list of authors from the diaspora. It's not uncommon for diaspora literature readers to encounter strange and repulsive cultural norms in the host nation. They may learn a lot about themselves, and the world, via the book's main character and other major figures. The challenges that women experience while migrating is discussed in the current study. In order to successfully integrate into a new culture, immigrants must be mentally open to assimilation. Women in Lahiri's fiction are neither healthy or entire. However, we have tried to examine these characters from as many angles as possible, including their feelings of isolation, racial and gender tensions, and the blurring of their public and private lives. The Indian diaspora literature addresses universal issues such as homesickness, loneliness, and social exclusion. These authors place a premium on establishing their authenticity and addressing the perception gap between locals and outsiders. The novel's title is a play on the reader's questioning about the meaning of the word. A child's name is a permanent part of

his or her identity. Those who emigrated from India kept up the traditions begun by their ancestors.

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