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An Examination of the Phenomenon of Culture Shock as Depicted in the Literary Works of Bharati Mukherjee

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ABSTRACT

Bharati Mukherjee, who attained a fortunate position in a very short creative journey, is one of the genuine creators of the Indian Diaspora. In her writings and two collections of short stories, written when she was living in exile in the US, she has shown the participation of Indian immigrants. She is an Indian-born author, certified essayist, writer, and writer of short stories. Her works about the life of Indian immigrants in the US make up the great majority of her body of work. In her writings, she delves into the subject of movement and transformation. One goal unites immigrants as well: to spend the remainder of their lives in America. They thus experience a process of transition and identity change as immigrants. She goes through many phases, including exile, advancement, and migration. Her difficulties with the ethos, customs, and people of her new nation (Canada) and her birthplace (India) are evident in her paintings (America). The essence of her accomplishment as a creative artisan is found in all of her works, which are characterized by the way that social turmoil creates mental urgency. She is effectively depicting the social tension between the East and the West as a psychological crisis inside the minds of her protagonists. Mukherjee specializes in delicate female leads who need a solid sense of social and personal identity. She worries that her hero won't make it in the unfamiliar surroundings. Her aim is to provide an engaging and transparent image of Indian living to the American public.

KEYWORDS: Bharati Mukherjee, novelist, cultural identity, India, American readers, Culture Shock.

INTRODUCTION

Indian writers of fiction have produced a substantial corpus of work in English today. Over the last twenty years, two female authors who have garnered considerable praise are Anita Desai and Bharati Mukherjee. Ruth is another female author, as is Kamala Markandaya.

Even though Nayantara Sahgal, Shashi Deshpande, and Pravar Jhabwala have all made incredible walks, Anita Desai and Bharati Mukherjee have received unparalleled levels of fundamental care. Diasporic author Bharati Mukherjee has conflicting thoughts about the place or group she moves to after leaving her own country. The diasporic author generally demonstrates expert group, professional national, or star religion learning.

Diaspora is defined by Edward Said as (i) filiations, or a unique bond with one's own country, and (ii) association, or a shift in the culture of the host country. American novelist Bharati Mukherjee, who was born in India, has garnered great critical praise around the world in a little over 25 years.

Novelist Bharati Mukherjee, who was born in India, hopes to be accepted as an American writer in order to conform to the norms of her own nation. Because "culture integration" is a crucial process for her and enjoys the luxury of recognition or osmosis instead of the anguish of difference, rejection, or alienation, she doesn't want to be called an outcast or an exile. Her later works show the capacity to create a character while simultaneously fitting in with the new social environment, while her early works capture the anguish of crumbling.

On July 27, 1940, Bharati Mukherjee was born in Calcutta, India. Her father, Sudhir Lal Mukherjee, was a sophisticated scientist who had assessed and carried out forward-thinking research in Germany and the UK. Her mother, Bina Mukherjee, was not very educated, as were most Bengali women in those days, but she and her husband made sure their three little girls had the finest education available. Mukherjee, along with her two sisters, pursued postgraduate studies and eventually became scholastics.

As members of the highest caste among Bengali Hindus, the Mukherjees were Bengali Brahmins. Faridpur, the ancestral home of Sudhir Mukherjee, and Dhaka, the home of his significant other, were both Bengali districts that were split off into East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after India's independence in 1947. In the first of multiple diasporas connected to Bharati Mukherjee's life, their family had moved to Calcutta together with a sizable number of other well-educated, well-regarded Hindus. As one of around forty tenants of the joint family house on Rash Behari Avenue in Calcutta's white collar elite, she grew up in a more remote family, surrounded by aunts, aunties, and cousins.

Mukherjee's early years were greatly influenced by her father. The 'Tiger' in her first book, *The Tiger's Daughter*, was inspired on the lively and gregarious guy Sudhir Mukherjee, who passed away in 1985. According to Mukherjee, who recalled the encounter for Canadian Fiction Magazine, he was "a rare man... especially the kindhearted father" who "wanted the best for his daughters." Moreover, he believed that the "best" implied lifestyles that were psychologically satisfying.

With the assistance of a Jewish immigrant from the Middle East, Sudhir Mukherjee had founded a pharmaceuticals company in Calcutta following his return from England, where he had obtained a Ph.D. from the University of London. Their company was successful up until the partners got into a

quarrel shortly after India became independent in 1947. Then, in order to undertake study, Sudhir Mukherjee left for London by himself with his two kids and significant other. But the accomplice found him in England, expressed regret, and asked that he go on with the organization's study project in the West until further notice. Consequently, Bharati Mukherjee was raised between London and Basel, Switzerland, where her father worked as a logicalist.

In 1951, Sudhir Mukherjee came back to Calcutta to assume a more prominent position in the firm, which was experiencing tremendous growth as a result of the popularity of the medicines he had developed. Days and Nights in Calcutta, the book Mukherjee authored with her better half Clark Blaise about her year-long stay in Calcutta, characterized as a liberation from the "startling collective holding" when he decided not to bring his family back to the joint family dwelling. Rather, he constructed a castle for his family in the vicinity of the processing factory, replete with a lake, a swimming pool, guards, and employees. The prosperous career Bharati Mukherjee had as a specialist and researcher was made possible by her father. That being said, the years they had spent in the West and the family's existence inside the gated complex suggested the sisters were becoming more apart from the white collar Calcutta of their childhood. Now, the family had "declined to converge with the city," Mukherjee wrote, having chosen to take a route that would ultimately take them all out of the city and into a distant place.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The mother of Bharati Mukherjee was a recurring figure in the lives of her young daughters. In a meeting published in Canadian Fiction Magazine, Mukherjee characterizes Bina Mukherjee as 'one of those special case Third World women who 'consumed' all her life for a training that was denied to well-raised women of her age,' a mother who 'ensured' that her little girls 'never endured similar needs'. As Mukherjee writes in Days and Nights in Calcutta, her mother was a "skilled storyteller" who "did not think about exact insights, only about energy." Despite her regard for her father, Bharati Mukherjee acknowledges that she was physically and irritably closer to her mother. After then, she started to look like Bina Mukherjee. Both of them are "an authority of feelings of disdain and affronts, and persistently unforgiving." Maybe this side of her nature shows in the intensity of the pain she still feels when she remembers her time in Canada. On many times throughout her daughters' early years, Bina Mukherjee had a significant influence. To 'ensure they're reached so nobody can push them to suffer,' for example, was driven by her wish to see her daughters free and shielded from the humiliations typically endured by white collar class women in traditional Hindu marital marriage. As a result of Bina Mukherjee's decision to supervise her daughters' reading and writing and send them to an Anglicized Bengali school rather than one where the vernacular dialect, Bengali, was the primary language of instruction, Bharati Mukherjee unintentionally lost faith in Calcutta and developed a fantasy of using 'an outside landmass' as her "battleground for substantiating self-esteem." Bharati Mukherjee was raised in a very close-knit household. This, together with the lifestyles they lead within the gated enclosure of the processing facility, left the young girls of Mukherjee feeling "sacred and distant." Bharati Mukherjee believes in the Hinduism that her parents instilled in her, even though, until recently, most of their beliefs were traditional and universal. In a sense, their parents had fostered qualities in their little girl that would cause Bharati to drift away from her family and her country. Their wish for their young girls to follow occupations apart from the family, to have an Anglicized education, and to live free, inevitable lives implied that Bharati Mukherjee would one day leave India and her family behind in order to follow her vocation as a scholastic writer overseas.

Education:

When Bharati Mukherjee was three years old, she was put to a bilingual school run by Protestant evangelists. Compared to other Bengali-medium institutions in the city, there was a stronger focus on English even though Bengali was the primary language of teaching. The family moved to England in 1947, and Mukherjee and her sisters were sent to a tiny tuition-based school in London. There, they excelled academically and soon became fluent in English, "carting away all of the trophies." Their Western education started when they were admitted to a German school in Basel. The young ladies were also enrolled in the prestigious Loreto Convent School, which Mukherjee describes as being run by Irish nuns who respected the "walled-off school compound in Calcutta as a corner always green and tropical of England." The family had now moved into a chateau that was walled off from the city.

It was implied that Mukherjee was now living at a further exclusion from ordinary Calcutta life and Bengali culture, which the nuns were showing her to 'debase,' because the sisters were traveling in a car with a protector and occasionally an escort vehicle in front of it to protect them from the brutality that was becoming all too common in Calcutta at the time. Clearly, this was a scenario that was ready for "difficulties." After studying English and discarding Bengali customs, Bharati became part of 'a class that did not live in its own vernacular', performing in Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and taking English rhetoric lessons. In other words, the process that would eventually lead to Mukherjee's deportation from her nation started when her family relocated to London and picked up speed throughout her time in high school.

After completing her studies at the Loreto Convent School, Bharati obtained a B.A. (with distinction) in English from the University of Calcutta in 1959. After that, she and her father escaped to Baroda. She graduated from the University of Baroda with a master's degree in English and ancient Indian culture. Her parents were devout Hindus, and she now realizes that the training she received in Baroda, which included a focus on her country's history, was invaluable in fortifying the religious rules instilled in her and helping to balance the very Anglicized tutoring she had been receiving up until that point. These ideas remain significant to Mukherjee, who has attempted to include novel applications of Hindu concepts such as the potential for rebirth in pieces like Jasmine.

Since she was a young kid, Mukherjee had dreamed of being an essayist. In fact, while she was still in her teens and living in London, she had written 60 or 80 pages of a book about English youngsters. She had romanticized historical events from Europe in her short tales for the Loreto Convent School's journal, Palm Leaves. When she was in school, she had made the decision to become an essayist rather than a researcher like her father. Accepting the decision, Sudhir Mukherjee was the one who, in 1960, searched for a meeting American scholastic to find out where he could send his

little child to be prepared for formal fiction writing. On the American educator's recommendation, he addressed a letter to the artist Paul Engle, who was then enrolled in the University of Iowa's Creative Writing Program. The letter plus a recommendation from another visiting American scholar led to Bharati Mukherjee being given the go-ahead and financing to pursue graduate studies in the US. She enrolled at the University of Iowa Writer's Workshop in September 1961 as a consequence of her passion to write and her father's desire to leave her country for an education in North America. She had traveled to live in the West previously, but this was the first time she had done so on her own, and she had no plans to go back to India. Mukherjee graduated with an M.F.A. from the University of Iowa in 1963. Her proposal included a collection of short tales that she had submitted. She was admitted into the English Department's PhD program, demonstrating her obvious impact on the faculty (she received a Ph.D. in English and near writing in 1969).

Career:

Bharati Mukherjee is able to effectively balance her work as a compositionist with her study of English and close writing. She moved to Wisconsin in 1964 to teach English at Marquette University and then the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where her academic career officially started. In 1966, she started working at McGill University in Montreal with her significant other. Mukherjee began his career at this university as a teacher and quickly advanced through the ranks to become a full professor in 1978. While at McGill, she published academic expositions, *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972), *Wife* (1975), and the synergistic *Days and Nights in Calcutta*. She also distinguished herself during this period of time as the administrator of the graduate English exams and the head of McGill's composition department. In addition, she was given stipends for her work by the Guggenheim Foundation (1978–79), the Canada Arts Council (1973–74), and McGill University (1968, 1970).

Because of this, Mukherjee has had incredible success as a full-time researcher and as a creative writer. How has her writing been affected by her instruction? 'If I could afford to live exclusively on my writing, I suppose I'd be fairly productive,' she says in an interview with *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, acknowledging that the duties of teaching at a university have indeed hindered her. The reason she likes to run fiction classes, she continues, is that they help her "hone my theories about writing." Despite having worked in administration and taught conventional literature courses, her published interviews and articles show that she is the kind of writer who thrives in a classroom environment.

Marriage

Mukherjee's work as a researcher and writer has been greatly impacted by her marriage to essayist and writer Clark Blaise. They have had "a fairly abstract marriage," as Mukherjee puts it, despite having two children. As one would expect, a pair has had a big influence on each other's professions. For example, Mukherjee relocated to Canada in 1966 at his request to teach at McGill University because, at the time, he had felt that, despite her concerns about going north, he intended to retreat to Canada to restore his fundamental foundations. However, Blaise required them to start over in the United States, so she left Montreal in 1980. Blaise was born in North Dakota in 1940 and raised in Gainesville, Florida. Soon after he enrolled at Iowa's Writer's Workshop in February 1962, he met Mukherjee, and they were married in September 1963 over lunch. Since then, they have lived apart the most of the time, but they have also sometimes had to live apart due to their need to migrate to areas where employment were available.

Blaise is a published writer of fiction with two volumes of short stories under her belt. She is a gifted writer who has been often included in anthologies. Two publications, *A North American Education* (1973) and *Tribal Justice* (1979), as well as a collection of short stories and autobiographical essays, *Resident Aliens* (1986). As the title of this last book suggests, Blaise, like Mukherjee, has been enthralled by the enchantment of movement, the status of recent immigrants, and the sense alienation often felt by exiles.

Working with Blaise on abstract problems is "constantly energising," according to Mukherjee. Together, the two have authored two full-length novels. Screenplay based on *Days and Nights in Calcutta*; *Days and Nights in Calcutta* and *The Sorrow and the Terror*, a somewhat extended account of the life of the controversial author Salman Rushdie after *The Satanic Verses*. It's clear that the definition of collaboration varies depending on the work. When it comes to covering information, the book about their holiday in India is a compilation of disparate recordings, while the book about the actual India airplane catastrophe was a "more purposeful" endeavor in which the two authors attempted to capture every little detail.

Cultural Shock in Bharati Mukherjee's Wife:

The melodies and snippets of epic sonnets sung by the traveling minstrel planted the germ for the book in the medieval ambiance of a fascinating tale of love and adventure. Published around 1350, Boccaccio's *Decameron* is a revered collection of literary love stories. These kinds of short tales are gathered together in Italian "novellas." Bharati Mukherjee's female heroes are immigrants who encounter social adversity, but they are determined to forge ahead and embrace their courageous journeys, which is why, in a relatively short 25 years, Bharati Mukherjee has garnered international recognition. A detailed analysis of her works demonstrates that, while she has been recognised as a voice for underprivileged immigrants, she has mostly written from the viewpoint of women's activists. Mukherjee's portrayal of women and their many connections highlights the influence of practical customs in conventional culture, in addition to the opportunities for autonomy and empowerment that exist for women in their diasporic circumstances.

CONCLUSION

The sensitive people in Mukherjee's work are always at the forefront; they lack a distinct sense of social character and are often the targets of racism, sexism, and other types of social abuse. Her own experiences serve as inspiration for most of her fantastic literature. Her works has a flavor that is

uncommon among authors living in exile, because of a strong feeling of inclusion that almost seems like verifiable evidence in the characters. Her approach to objective neutrality is to provide the facts in an easy-to-understand and humorous way. She is concerned about her defenseless heroes and sometimes feels sympathy for them, but she also sometimes ignores their helplessness. Her personal preference hasn't affected her profession, even though she has direct experience with the horrible process of digestion.

Bharati Mukherjee makes a concerted effort in her writing to portray immigrants as people who successfully acclimatize themselves to a new social environment and stake their claim to American character. In an attempt to offer themselves another opportunity to design their life, they strive to carve out a place here. As an immigrant artisan, she viewed migration as a chance to remake herself, rather than as a broken and repressed exile writer only drawn to the subversive possibilities of life on the edge. In addition to giving expression to her opinion that migration provided a freedom from the restrictive societal and social boundaries of her home country, Bharati Mukherjee saw migration as a chance for the author in her to speak to the experiences. America is an immigrant nation, and the sustainability of the nation depends on migration. Every American who has ever lived, with the exception of native Indians, is either an immigrant or a descendent of an immigrant.

It is essential to comprehend why America is referred to be a "land of nations" and how immigrant conflicts are included into the larger picture in order to properly appreciate Mukherjee's work. The immigrant's dedication is evident in many facets of life. Expressions, teaching, legislation, and religion have all contributed to the richness of the nation's fabric. The characters created by Bharati Mukherjee are descendants of earlier immigrants, except that each character's request is distinct. Through her compelling portrayal of her characters' experiences as immigrants, she has touched Americans' hearts with harmony; they can relate to and recall their own struggles and depressing thoughts. She has therefore managed to carve out a place for herself in the illuminatus universe of American essayists, in spite of her restricted capacity for concentration.

An exemplar of ostracism literature is Bharati Mukherjee, who was reared in the United States after being born in India. The majority of her publications focus on the experiences of Indian immigrants in the US. She works to revitalize the image of those women who, after experiencing foreign culture for the first time, overthrew the Indian social inheritance and acknowledged their altered selves. The most crucial aspect of them is their soul, which enables them to reject their previous culture and fit in with the new one. The mind of an immigrant is constantly shocked because to the psychological tension formed between the two socio-social contexts, between the feelings of rootlessness and wistfulness. A person must battle for his survival as an outcast in a dead zone as they journey to an unfamiliar place. He defeats the new emotion sentimentality by eliminating another area and enclosing himself in the west's bait. He assumes a new identity and develops passionate ties to the place he considers home. He begins to lose sight of his own distinct local culture as a result of this constant exposure to a different self. He finds that his local touch and taste have made him an outcast when he goes back to his hometown. He must battle his fractured identity as his mind is once again split between the social strife of two circumstances.

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