

JETIR.ORG

ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue



# JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)

An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## SEARCH FOR SELF IN AN ALIEN LAND IN BHARATI MUKHARJI'S *JASMINE*

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### **Abstract**

Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*, is a novel tells the story of young Indian woman, Jasmine, in the United States who is struggling to get assimilated to the host society. This research paper discusses the identify migration and its Consequences in ones the struggles of survival in an alien society. The immigrant life, alienation and self-discovery the essence of this study. The dislocation, loss and the quest for identity are detailed here. The heroin of the novel undergoes several transmissions in order to get adapted to the Western way of life. She started as Jyothi and moved to Jasmine then to Jane. In all those lives she was estranged from herself. This article discusses the journey of the protagonist from Jyoti to Jane in search of identity. The

transformations can be counted as her search for self. This study focusses on different names chosen by Jyothi in her search for self. It gives importance to immigrant experiences of an illegal immigrant, especially the south Asian's.

Keywords: Migration, self-discovery, disorientation, alienation.

## **Introduction**

Bharati Mukherjee is an Indian Diasporic writer who focused on the women migrant, experiences and sufferings. All her literacy works are on the and are women centered and belong to the creamy layer of society who choose to live in Some foreign land. This particular novel *Jasmine* discusses the Socio-political background of the expatriate life in America. This is a migration narrative which elaborates the struggles behind the American identity. This is the story of an Indian woman who becomes European model of success.

Bharati Mukherjee is an Indian American writer. The cultural background of her novels is West Bengal. She discusses the problems of migration, displacement as well as alienation. She elaborates how the migrants struggle to survive strange land to reroute themselves. The major characters of her novels are laying get assimilated. Her major literary works are *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971), *Wife* (1975), *Jasmine* (1989), *The Holder of the World* (1993) *leave it to me* (1999), *Desirable Daughters* (2002), *The Tree Pride* (2004) *Miss New India* (2011). At first Mukherjee had published a short story in the name. *Jasmine* and later developed it into a full-fledged novel.

The protagonist of the novel *Jasmine* born in an Indian village in 1965. She was born in 1965 in Hasnpur. When the novel starts she is a pregnant woman who turned 24 years old and living with her lover Bud Ripplemeyer She narrates her life from the Punjabi to birth to her American adulthood. This biographical events are the backdrop of her life in Iowa. She had been a life of full of unpredictable events and various places she was running from. Her life was full of struggles including two murders, a suicide, a rape, three love stories and s maiming. Throughout the novel the readers can see, that her name and identity is changing several times. At first she was named Jyoti then Jasmine, Jazzy, Jase, and Jane She changes her location from Hanapers to Fowlers Key Florida Clear Tampa), then to New York city Flushing. She' then runs away to Manhattan then to Baden at the time of the narration. She is in Iowa and later heading towards California.

## **Search for self in *Jasmine***

The novel *Jasmine* can be called a novel of 'identity crisis'. It is novel the life happenings of a Punjabi girl named Jyothi. She was married to Prakash who is preparing to America. Just as any other Indian bride she prepared her mind to accompany her husband. She was dreaming her life in America. But on the day of his departure, he was murdered later her journey to America was the beginning of a series of transformation. Quickly she learned the language and life of America. She was constantly pursuing every opportunity to become an American. According to her Journey was a kind of "Sati" in the beginning she charged her name to 'Jase' and. At the end she could recognize her husband's murderer and killed him It was the khalsa lion Sukhwinder who killed Prakash, she then changed her name to 'Jase' and went to Iowa. In this novel the readers can see that She is changing her name as per new situation representing the power women. She discarded her identity in her name as well as caste and gender. She is an example for a great

adapter. She could defeat all the obstacles in front of her and could create. She came to America as an illegal and she was brutally raped immigrant and by once. Throughout her life she was living with some families. Just like her name, she had different relationships. She could handle her 'Indian duties' and American dreams. When the situation demanded she changed from the dutiful wife. Jasmine to a more liberated Jase. She to a was conscious of hiding her past. She created her new world by including new values are as well as ideas and skills. All these transitions are visible in her relationship with men.

This novel can be considered as the celebration of Individual freedom & which is typical of American culture Bharati Mukherjees novels create a microcosm of India in the US. All the Indian Diaspora writers knowingly or unknowingly create an Indianans in US with Indian cuisine, clothing's, language, and customs. Changing name by the protagonist represents an Indian immigrant woman's Search for self in an alien land, Here the protagonist represents the Indian More relevance in the backdrop of the users written by the novelist like history culture, identity and immigration. The character Jasmin can be Considered the sum total of all as the ideas in the nonfictional works of Bharati Mukherjee. Although the story develops through the backdrop of the political upheavals in India, it' does not pay attention to it. The family of Jyoti had bad some experience result of partition. Even the ugh this partition of has a traumatic effect in the Indian history Mukherjee doesn't give importance of the same. Millions of people lost their lives as a result of violence and lack of food. Millions of people were dislocated. Women were kidnapped and raped. But to this novel nothing about these facts were Mukherjee describe, the plight of Jasmine's family. They felt an acute sense of displacement. They were leading upper class life in Lahore, but compelled to leave all behind. They lost their shops and lands as well as their family name. They had to settle in a mudhut - Jasmine rejects this

Marajo, my mother, couldn't forget the Partition Riots. Muslim sacked our house, Neighbors servants tugged off earrings and bangle defiled Grottoes sobered my grandfather's horse. Life shouldn't have turned out. That way I've never been to Lahore, but the loss survives in the instant Replay of family story: forever Lahore, smokes, forever my parents Flee (41)

The traumatic experience of partition compelled them to exile. Gradually her mother became pessimistic in life. Her father could not accept the new locality for since he was obsessed with Lahore. He could not stop wearing karats. He continued listening Pakistani radio broadcasting. He was reluctant to anything in the Indian side of Punjab just like women, Punjabi dialect, Mango, music. This trauma had a persist and influence in the second generation. Jasmine says, "Lacking a country avoiding all the messiness I of is as an immigrant eventually harms even the finest Sensibility" (29)

Their trauma is visible in her words when she talks about her father, "He will never see Lahore again and I never. Only a foot would let it rule his life . But just opposite to her father Jasmine simply embraced the messiness f new atmosphere as the real place for new birth. She was not superstitious. She was a pragmatist, who opposes the astrologer's words that humans are helpless, in front of fate. The reader can see this in her words when she had a scar on her face. Her sister yelled at her that she may not get a husband. But she considered her as helpless or domed.

In this novel Bharati Mukherjee lakes Iowa as the center. Here Jasmine recollects her past. Here discuss the stories of her childhood, short married life, her travel to America. Here the central element of the plat is flash back and Here she became. Jane When's memory & her life experiences she was by narrating the burden of raising a girl. She contrasts her birth to a boy's birth in which he will be considered as a luck.

The burden of getting married to someone giving dowry, all the curses, all her experiences are a punishment to for the Sin in the past life. The birth and life of a girl is never considered as luck but the moment she entered the world the thoughts and discussions about the is also enter. The women who gives birth to daughters are more cared. She felt that her mother's past life was full of sins, that is why she has many daughters. All those shows the nature of the society in which she was born. But she was not willing to submit to these taboos. She has a will to confront. All these social the circumstances show the Indian society's blind adherence to the tradition in the childhood itself Jasmine was different from all other girl including her sisters. She in was an excellent student in the school. She had some intellectual potency but all men in her village preferred women without brain. Her teacher helped her to get more education. She was against the family norms was courageous to go against her grandmother's words. In Jyoti's life, her first transformation was "Jasmine name given by her husband Prakash. It is her sense of responsibility as "Jasmine "compelled her to go to Florida. Because, it was her husband's plan. The next transformation was to Jazzy". When she met Lillian Gordon, who called her Jazzy, she on opportunity get to head towards New York... In New York she met. Mr. Vadhera. He was s professor who Later promised her to get once was parents She started to work with Taylor Hayes and Wylie Here she was transformed to "Tare", a name: given by Taylor. It is here she happened to see Prakash's Murderer Sukhwinder.

Then she went to Iowa. Here she was named "Jane" But towards the end she threw away her name as 'Jane' and in an aside to the astrologer that she will re-arrange the stars. In all her transformations for survival she had some body to understand her feelings by but the story of her birth to in the middle of poverty in a village in Punjab was entirely foreign to mother Ripplemeyer. This is reflected in Jasmine's words:

I thought we could trade some world-class poverty stories, but mine make her uncomfortable. Not that she's hostile. It is like looking at the name in my passport and seeing "Jya-" at the beginning and deciding that her mouth was not destined to make those sounds. She can't begin to picture a village to Punjab. She doesn't my mind stories about New York and Florida because she's been to Florida many times and seen enough pictures of New York" (P.16)

These words shows that even there is a long charm between two foreigners to understand the common feelings like Sorrow”

## Conclusion

In this the sufferings of the protagonist symbolizes the struggles to escape from isolation and othering. Throughout the novel the readers can see the heroin is thrown from one insecurity to another. In this novel *Jasmin* "Jyoti" was struggling for personal identity as well as national in the foreign land. In all her transformation the role of a male is visible. She tells I have had a husband for each of the women I have been. Prakash for Jasmine, Taylor for Jase, Bud for Jane. Half-face for Kali "(P: 197). All her life can be divided into different chapters in accordance with the presence of various men. For her, all these names and were to fro forget the past. Hence, one can assume that all her Journeys and Transformations are different phases of her quest for identity. She was struggling to find her true self. Her Journey to the US was the beginning of a series of struggles in which was fighting for survival. She experienced the worst forms of hardship She could

come through all those hardships and attained her, own identity in a totally strange land. Bharati Mukherjee could successfully picture. the identity crisis and search for self, through the protagonist Jasmine'.

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