



## R.K. Narayan and Bharati Mukherjee cultural Transactions in their novels – a comparative study

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**Abstract-** In this article we try to study on comparative ground in cultural transaction in R.K.Narayan and Bharati Mukherjee in their novels. Bharati Mukherjee to focus very wide coverage with social and feminism issues, immigration in her novels depicts. But R.K.Narayan also a famous writer in Kerala but his area is narrow perspective, his novels to explore social and cultural transaction right places.

**Keywords:** Historical imagination, Acculturation, Cultural Transactions, Rituals, Ideas, Beliefs, Customs

### I. INTRODUCTION

Novels are considered not only time passing and entertainment, but also as a guide to understand the values of life; sorrow of life; and society constructed with various cultured aspects and significance. The novel can, of course, have its 'setting' or background in any part of the world and any time, past, present or future. As regards the local or regional setting, certain authors have almost marked out a territory of their own. As a general principle, any lesson a novelist wishes to teach us is all the more impressive if it emerges from the story itself and the fortunes of its characters. In the hands of a write of any skill, the effect may be tremendous, for of all types of imaginative literature the novel undoubtedly commands the most powerful and wide spread popular influence.(B.Prasad-pp-196-198)

### II. CULTURAL AND CULTURAL TRANSACTIONS IN NOVEL

Generally, culture consists of language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, work of art, rituals, ceremonies and soon. The existence and use of culture depends upon an ability possessed by man alone. Oxford advanced learners dictionary of current English defines culture as advanced development of the human powers, development of the body, mind and spirit by training experience; all the arts, beliefs, social institutions. Characteristics of a community, race etc. ( Oxford Dictionary –p-210) critics like Mathew Arnold, Lionel Trilling, F.R. Leavis and Raymond Williams believe that literature is the best medium for preserving and the best vehicle for the transmission of culture from generation to generation, thus forming and perpetuating a tradition in culture. Almost all important Indian writers carving out novels and short stories in English have transmuted the encounters of cultures in their works. These writers' cultural transactions are occupied on psychological and emotional grounds. Social conditions and economic compulsions have particularly made these transactions possible.

When we analysis R.K. Narayan and Bharati Mukherjee's novels, we may find out the cultural transactions basically to construct the plots and characters widely. For that R.K.Narayanselted his field in Karanataka and Bharati Mukherjee in Kolkata. Not only that numerous Indian and Asian writers like Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, FaroukhDhondy, Anita Desai, Ruth PrawerJhabwala, AnjanaAppachana, Kiran Desai, ChitraBanaerjee, Divakaruni, Kamala Markandaya, Allen Sealy, BapsiSidhwaBapsi, Michael Ondaatje, ArdashiVakil, Meena Alexander and so on. All are acted as representative in the cultural transactions in their novels.

Rushdie uses magic realism that gives his works artistic height. It shows his signature style featuring hyper activity of the language and historical imagination. V.S. Naipaul's novel 'the suffrage of Elvira' depicts the rootless society of India in Trinidad who is quite initiative and hungry for material gain. Mignel Street is a volume of linked short stories. It depicts the poverty of socially mixed street, predominantly black, brown Indians and some whites. It portrays the expatriates' ways of asserting identity through escape from realities.

Kamala Markandaya is a prolific writer. Her novel 'Nectar in a Sieve' depicts rural Indian life. It documents the life of Indian peasantry, family bonding in India, impact of unpredictable monsoon on farming, poverty and sufferings of the sons and daughters of soil. Ruth PraverJhabwala is critical of the Indian people's hankering for wealth and material. The cheat gullible westerners who hanker for spiritual experience. She believes that one must be rooted in one's own culture otherwise the person drifts now here. One must learn the best of the other culture but to desert one's own ideology and culture for another's would create nothing but despair and void.

Anita Desai deals with the theme of orthodoxy, domestic and social oppression in India. The two cultures of the west and the East have also been contrasted. Her concerns are more on gender biases rather than expatriation. BapsiSidhwa in her novel exposes religious atrocities and ethnic conflicts associated with partition. It depicts border feminism of Parsee women who as border women seek to heal the wounds of the partitioned India.

Bharati Mukherjee belongs to this category of writers who has dealt with root lessens of expatriates but she feels that assimilation and acculturation are the true solutions that can solve the problem of any multi ethnic and multi cultural society. Her cultural transactions are very high and valuable. At the same time R.K.Narayan's cultural transaction is centered in his native land and region. He selected the local and regional cultures aspects, crisis and conflicts. So that his transactions are difference and valuable as a guide line. The two's basics are the same, but approaches and declarations are difference, for this purpose Bharathi Mukherjee selected the protagonists as high and well educated with civilized family but R.K.Narayan selected the protagonists from the middle class and normal educated with good hearted civilized persons.

### III. R.K. NARAYAN AND HIS NOVELS

R.K. Narayan offers an interesting contrast to that Mulk Raj Anand. Narayan's delicate blend of gentle irony and sympathy, quite realism and fantasy stands poles apart from Anand's militant humanism with its sledge hammer blows and his robust earthiness. Narayanan's novel 'The Dark Room' only attempt to write in a fictional register totally unsuited to his talent, a wholly serious tale of silent suffering and abject surrender. The victim is Savitri, who finding her husband infatuated with a working woman, leaves him and the children only to realize that a traditional, middle class Hindu wife is all but helpless, cut off from home. She pockets her pride and returns defeated to her unrepentant husband. It is difficult to sympathize with any of the three main characters here. (M.K.Naik-pp-168-169)

The guide, SahitaAkademi award is Narayan's finest novel. Nowhere else is his irony sharper or more firmly wedded to the moral imagination, nor has his technique been subtler. All are good example of his cultural transactions aspects of all Narayan's novels 'The Guide' teases us into thought to an extent no other novel of his does. Narayan's fictional technique is also at its subtlest in 'The Guide'. The narrative alternates between the past and the present, 'Swinging backward and forward' as Rosie does when she dances, thus emphasizing how Raju's present is inexorably rooted in his past. The blend of the omniscient and the autobiographical methods of narration endow the story with a double perspective. The novel, which opens with Raju in the ruined village temple about to be reverentially accepted as a Sahu, ends in the same locality with his enforced death, thus giving the tale a perfectly rounded, circular structure. (M.K.Naik-pp-171-172)

Some notable collections of essays are R.K. Narayan's next Sunday and Reluctant Guru both illustrative of this author's keen observation of men and manners and his gentle irony. His gods, Demons and others is a retelling of stories from Hindu mythology. In 'The man- Eater of Malgudi' R.K. Narayan's moral concern is expressed through a retelling, in a modern context, of the ancient Hindu fable of Bhasmasura, the Rakshasa, who granted by Siva the boon of reducing to ashes anyone he touched on the

head, was finally tricked by Vishnu into touching himself to death. The modern Bhasmasura is Vasu, the taxidermist, a selfish, godless bully who, as he waits to shoot the temple elephant, accidentally kills himself when he slaps at a mosquito buying near his forehead.

To Vasu's demon, his friend Nataraj, the timid printer and ineffectual angel is an excellent foil. The significance of Vasu's just end is underlined by Sastri, Nataraj's assistant and an eminent representative of the average man. Every demon carries within him, unknown to himself, a tiny seed of self destruction, and goes up in thin air at the most unexpected movement otherwise what is to happen in humanity.

I am 'waiting for the Mahatma' a novel dealing with the Gandhi an freedom struggle, Narayan, trying to do too many things at once, only succeeds in telling a conventional love story ending in the union of Sriram, a typical, weak willed Narayan hero and a determined young girl, of Narayan's main aim here was to depict the freedom struggle of 1942, his picture is neither representative nor conversation into a freedom fighter is unconvincing, because he is so obliviously interested in Bharati and not in Bharat - Mata. Certain touches in episodes like Gandhiji's arrest etc., raise hopes of a total ironic vision, but this stance is not kept up consist entry, and when the scene shifts from Malgudi to Delhi, Narayan no longer appears to be on sure ground (M. Naik - pp - 172 - 173). Thus R. K. Narayan's cultural transactional are different from other novelists. His fantasy imagines and thinks are very attractive the readers to increase their reading habits.

#### IV. BHARATHI MUKHERJEE AND HER NOVELS

Bharathi Mukherjee has ascertained herself as a valuable member of the American Literary scene. Her most of the notable writings reflects not only her pride in Indian heritage, but also her celebration of embracing America as said in an interview in the Massachusetts review, 'the immigrants in my stories go through extreme transform America and at the same time they alter the country's appearance and psychological makeup'.

All human beings adopt their mother culture so it becomes their identity. Immigration poses a new dilemma of cultural identity. There starts a cultural conflict between mother culture and adopted culture. Consequently this process leads to psychological crisis. Bharati Mukherjee's fictional world of women immigrants presents the unwanted experience in the process of expatriation to immigration. Her women protagonists resultantly suffer from sense of alienation, identity crisis, cultural shock and a consequently psychological conflict. Bharati Mukherjee deals with the cultural transactions that occur in the lives of the immigrants. The quality of cultural transaction in all its multiplicity forms the vital point of the fulfillments of the writer Bharati Mukherjee.

Jasmine a famous and peculiar novel. In this novel cultural transaction held through Jasmine. First Hindu religious astrology beliefs and trust are placed. When Jasmine accepts her pregnancy said one philosophical comment about the nature. Author did it with new way and approach. Bharati Mukherjee in the novel, 'The Holder of the World' is one of the most relevant, fantastic and marvelous in the cultural transaction. Hannah Easton recites and narrates fragments from 'The Ramayana'. 'Nature' Bharati Mukherjee used this as a messenger in her cultural transaction. Author considered, 'the book of nature is the book of fate; she turns the gigantic pages; leaf after leaf never returning as the Emerson's statement.

Each and every Hindu family well krishnan's statement to Arjuna in Geetha. Bharati Mukherjee used this through Raja Jadav Singh. She got very famous credit and name in the readers world through the Geetha expiation and proves that Bharati Mukherjee truly an Indian writer and followed all Indians customs as possible. She cannot forget her mother land. Actually the novel 'The Holder of the World' has ample and useful cultural transaction with great manners.

Bharati Mukherjee's novel 'Wife' is a psychological study of Dimple, a young woman from Calcutta and of her problems in settling down in New York with her new husband. Author has shown in this novel that Dimple finds a 'little India' in New York. People like Sens, Mehras, Khannas and Bhattacharyas all talking in familiar language, everybody is full of praise for Indian culture, tradition and they criticize American way of life. The author has depicted the unity that exists in immigrant Indians that can be seen through the following

statement by Jyoti; 'wasn't it wonderful that Indians aboard were so outgoing and open minded? They did not give adman about communalism and petty feelings. They personally counted a number of Punjabis, Guajarati's and south Indians among their friends. This unity enables them to retain their identity on the foreign land.

Bharati Mukherjee's very famous novel 'Desirable Daughter' is a thought provoking and reflective story of three Calcutta born Brahmin sisters who belonged to an affluent family. They were famous for their beauty, brains, wealth and privileged position in society. Mukherjee has pointed their lives as they leave their conservative, sheltered child hood home, where they inculcated culture, tradition and values of their society.

In this novel, Bharati Mukherjee as foreword quotes a small verse from an ancient Sanskrit poem, which brings out Tara's mission as 'no one behind, no one ahead. The path the ancients cleared has closed, and the other path, every one's path, easy and wide, goes nowhere. I am alone and find my way'. This is a very good, valuable and fantastic cultural transaction which is give acceptance that novelist Bharati Mukherjee has done good job in the cultural transaction through her novels.

Many reviewers have pointed out the contributions and achievements of Bharati Mukherjee in the field of cultural transactions through her writings. One of the significant themes of modern literature is the depiction of the cross cultural crisis, leading to psychological problems, a subject which has assumed a great significance in present word of globalization. BharatiMukherjee's writings are undoubtedly one of the best examples of this kind. In between she never forgot her home land's culture as high and low. Realism is full-fledged in her writings as crystal clear.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Thus we may conclude that R.K.Narayan and Bharati Mukherjee are dominated their writings with intellectual as coterie. Their basic aims and themes are the same. Methods and approaches are different. R.K.Narayan's field has limited boundaries. But Bharati Mukherjee's field wide and comprehensive. They are maintained humanistic naturalism in their writings. As per their plots cultural transactions have their own limits and descriptions. They never afraid to explore the society's actual aspects. They never forgot their angries and declare it time to time and place to place bravely. Bharati Mukherjee's cultural transactions are highly potency. R.K.Narayan's cultural transactions are mild but deep rooted. Both are gave respect of our culture and customs; but wants to change some one as per societies developments. Anyway, totally the two novelists' aims and themes are helps to change our society properly as intellectual.

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