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Search for Self-identity in Bharati Mukherjee's – Desirable Daughter's

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Abstract: Bharati Mukherjee holds a special place among the first generation North American writers of Indian origin. Mukherjee's novels are essential to the question of wistfulness for lost home, disappointment of expulsion, mutilation of the self, eagerness of migration, and consumption. She has received lot of awards. Her sixth novel is *Desirable Daughters* (2002). This novel presents the portrait of a traditional Indian Brahmin family and the contemporary story of an American Woman who has broken with customs but still remains tied to her native country. *Desirable Daughter's*, explores how Tara reunites with her home family country and tradition by way of quest of self-versus society, self-demolition and self-finding.
Keywords: Self-centered, Traditionalism, Modernity, Identity, Alienation, Diaspora, Migration.

1. INTRODUCTION

Desirable daughters 2002 novel by American Indian writer Bharati Mukherjee tells the story of three sisters, Padma, Parvati and Tara. Tara Lata is the protagonist of the novel. She belongs to the Brahmin community. She wants to lead a life with complete freedom but her parents never agreed to go to places of entertainment like park, theatre and so on. Only Tara and that sisters followed their parent's words. Even they were not allowed to attend that close friend's ceremonies. Tara Lata narrates about her ancestor's life. Tara Lata her names are named after her grandmother's name. Lata was 5 years old but they plan to marry her off. All were waiting for the bride groom's arrival but he didn't come happy had been bitten by a snake. Then the bride died. After his father ask dowry to Tara Lata family. But Taras father refused to give dowry to them. Later Tara married the tree so she was called "Tree Bride". Tree bride is the sequence of desirable daughter's novel. At the young age Tara was married to a bank officer his name is Bishwapriya (Bish). They did not lead a happy life. Because her husband wishes never gave important to Tara. Only, he focused on his job. So, Tara wanted to divorce her husband. They had a child his name is Rabi. He was an adult age son. After she is a single parent raising their son Rabi, in an ethnically mixed San Francisco neighborhood. Having embarrassed with American culture of her contemporizes Tara is living with Andy, Hungarian Buddhist ex biker, and a carpenter. She is also peace with her existence also she finds a difficult to explain her Calcutta roots to her American friends and to describe an American lifestyle to her Bengali parents. Tara leads a happy life with Andy. But, she maintains secret relationship with Andy. Tara family followed lot of rules and regulations which is our tradition. But, Tara breaks the tradition and culture. After she divorced her husband she falls in love with Andy. One day she returned to her home. She was found a stranger who sat with her Son. That stranger claimed to be her nephew. He was the illegitimate son of her older sister Padma. He said that his name was Christopher Dey. Tara was shocked and then she asked lot of questions about her sister. But, he doesn't answer properly. So, she guessed that person is a liar and then warned him. Sister Parvati lives a complement confined domestic life with a husband Auro. She followed the Indian traditions while Tara lift and ultra-modern free life as a divorcee where she is provided with every opportunity to enjoy progress and liberty. Both the sisters exist on two extremes whereas Padma seeks balance between the two. She lives and independent life with her husband Harish Mehta and does not altogether discard her cultural values. When Tara heard that Christopher Dey is illegitimate son of her older sister. She was shocked and then realised her mistake to be in love with Andy. After she realised her mistake, she returned to her home land with her son Rabi.

2. THEME OF ALIENATION

Tara's alienation haunted by a restrictive past culture leads her to transgress the norms of very society of which once she was a desirable daughter. She happily accepts the liberties that the new culture gives her. Tara not only divorces Bish but is awakened into a new self and a new understanding of her sexuality. She moves freely in the American society without internalizing the criticism she receives from others and from her sisters, Padma and Parvati. Not just Tara, the eldest Padma was once in a relationship with Ronald Dey and Parvati also made a love match with Harish. All these facts reveal a culture that gives little expression and freedom to women leading to an explosion of their pent up desires and feelings. Bharati Mukherjee's heroine Tara assimilates into the new culture and the liberties that it gives, along with balancing her past culture. In the end of *Desirable Daughters*, Tara reunites with Bish and revisits India. She is a perfect blend of tradition and modernity. Tara is a hybrid conscience for whom rejection of either culture is impossible. She knows the positives of both and inculcates them into herself, giving birth into a new identity as a whole. Two sisters, Tara and Padma, move to the United States, while the third, Parvati, stays in India. Although the influence of American culture is strong on those who live in America, the complexity of their situation is far beyond what they could have predicted. In 1960s California, in particular, the strong Orientalist fascination with spirituality clashes with the realities of South Asian society. The idea of living in two conceptual worlds shapes Tara's own understanding of her life and her reaction to Christopher's claims. Furthermore, even as Padma rejects Indian influence, she appropriates it to further her career. Padma's successful New York life as a television personality, fashion expert, and businesswoman seems to mark the greatest distance from traditional Indian culture. Parvati, who stays in India, derives much of her personal satisfaction from traditional roles as wife and mother. With this apparently simplistic contrast, one would expect Tara to occupy the middle ground. Mukherjee defies this expectation, however, by reminding the reader of the 1960s setting: a bomb disrupts Tara's life when it seriously injures her ex-husband. Tara, in particular, faces difficult choices that compel her to embrace the Indian identity she had been so anxious to escape.

3. CONCLUSION

Tara Chatterjee's life has been ruled by her father. Not only Tara, her sisters Padma and Parvati obeyed to the decisions made by him. Everything was pre-decided and a fixed rule for them like going to the Convent School, what to watch, where to go, when to go and what to do. Her father kept a close watch on all three of them. Tara's marriage to Bish is also arranged by her father. Thus Tara had no say in any of the matters relating to her life. Transplanted to America she is dislocated, isolated and crushed under the weight of Bish's expectations. Bish, the Silicon Valley millionaire fails to give her the minimal attention that a human being, especially his wife deserves. Materialistic comfort is what she gets unasked. Tara thus, happily accepts the American culture that grants her enough liberties with its ultramodern outlook on life. She divorces Bish, engages into a live in relationship with the Hungarian Andy, starts working, changes her wearing, and even drives. Her assimilation into the American culture highlights the limitations and restrictions of Indian culture that restrained her from enjoying herself. In America, her sexuality is enjoyed to the fullest.

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