

# GOLDEN RESEARCH THOUGHTS

## PERSPECTIVE OF MULTICULTURALISM IN ROHINTON MISTRY'S SUCH A LONG JOURNEY



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### **Abstract :**

The present research paper focuses on the perspective of multiculturalism in Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey*. It is a social theory that recognizes and respects minority cultures which have been suffering from social injustice, exclusion, marginalization, dispossession, dislocation and social discrimination. The paper particularly deals with Parsi community and their sufferings while living in the multicultural society. It also tries to represent social harmony among the people from diverse community. Multiculturalism tries to make harmony in the nation and it is 'unity in diversity'.

**Keywords:** multiculturalism, identity, harmony, diversity, unity, God.

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### INTRODUCTION

Rohinton Mistry is one of the popular and most prominent novelists in Indian English Literature from Parsi community. He migrated and settled down in Canada even though he doesn't forget his motherland India. The main theme of his writing deals with India. The novel shows his attachment, feeling and emotions for Parsi community and Bombay city of seven lands. Mistry extracted the title of the novel *Such a Long Journey* from T.S. Eliot's famous poem *The Journey of the Magi*. The research paper takes efforts to reflect multicultural aspect in *Such a Long Journey*. The novel deals with the life of Parsi protagonist named Gustad and his suffering on his life journey. Being a Parsi himself, Mistry takes the responsibility to represent the realistic approach of Parsi community. To understand how the social, historical, political and religious conditions affect the Parsi community's identity have to be simplified by the writer.

As a Parsi, Rohinton Mistry is an ingredient of a minority community in India which associates its ancestry to pre-Islamic Persia. Thus, Nilufer Bharucha's comment, that Mistry, as an Indian of Persian origin, was 'diaspora even in India'<sup>1</sup>. Rohinton Mistry is an author for whom India is significant as a theme of his work. Particularly Bombay is the master resource of his writing he has published. Bombay is the city that is home to the Parsi community after "running away from the Muslims."<sup>2</sup> Bombay plays very important part in his writing. He intentionally states the city Bombay in his writing which shows his love for the city.

The multicultural aspects exists in the novel are culture, identity, society, politics, religion, gender, language, migration, isolation, homelessness, globalization, education, faith, food, festivals, customs, toleration, and conflict. All these multicultural aspects are finely stated in *Such a Long Journey*. Rohinton Mistry's writing shows a new kind of writing. Very thoughtfully he has remembered his community's journey through time and history with a sense of reminiscence. The place of Parsis in the postcolonial India gives way to a new kind of psychological pain, which Mistry reflects throughout an oppositional form of examination. Gustad Noble is very typical Parsi character portrayed in the novel. He not only practices all rituals and prayers of Parsi community but also enjoys Western Culture too.

In the age of globalization and network variety of language plays vital role. So novelist like Rohinton Mistry doesn't bother to use mixture of language in his writing. The language variety shows attachment towards other community of the nation. Linguistic approach expresses multiculturalism of language in the novel. Here Rohinton Mistry never thought to use Indian regional dialect. *Such a Long Journey* is the mixture of all languages including English, Gujarati and Marathi also. Hence, the paper shows that Rohinton Mistry doesn't forget to use Indian languages in his writing. Indian people haven't any difficulty in using different languages from other community to speak. So language is one of the medium to share ideas, feelings and emotions with each other in the society. Language is the strong pillar of multiculturalism. India is the nation of different languages and every citizen feels proud of his own language as well as he offers respect for other language also. The linguistic differences are shown in *Such a Long Journey*. The canteen is the best example: "No linguistic or ethnic group was spread; perfect equality prevailed in the canteen when it came to jokes."<sup>3</sup>

The Pavement artist decorated the perspective of multiculturalism through his painting. The wall in *Such a Long Journey* becomes the best example of multicultural perspective. Pavement artist painted religious images on the wall which represents the symbol of unity in diversity. It becomes representation of religious harmony in the society. The transformation of the wall becomes holy place to worship God and Goddesses. The pavement artist says to Gustad:

"There is no difficulty. I can cover three hundred miles if necessary. Using assorted religions and their gods, saints and prophets: Hindu, Shikh, Judaic, Christian, Muslim, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Jainist. Actually, Hinduism alone can provide enough. But I always like to mix them up, include a variety in my drawings. Makes me feel I am doing something to promote tolerance and understanding in the world."<sup>4</sup>

The big but dirty wall is changed into sacred wall such a beautiful thing. Transformation of the wall represents acceptance of new changes in the multicultural society and live with harmony. Transformation plays very vital role in the age of globalization and migration. Everything is changeable or transformational so this is the rule of multiculturalism to change and transform it into new one. Because holy wall passerby peoples offering their respect and honoring the wall by worshipping very heart fully and passionately. Changing attitude of the Indian people with new environment is shown in the novel. According to Pandit Nehru:

"India was changing and progressing all the time. She was coming into intimate contact with the Prsians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Arabs, the Central Asians, and the peoples of the Mediterranean."<sup>5</sup>

The picture of social harmony and secularism is portrayed by the pavement artist, whose name and identity is deliberately keeps mysterious in the novel by Mistry. He painted images of different religious deities on the wall – Hindu, Christian and Islamic and even the goddess beloved to prostitutes, Yellama. People from different religious faiths presenting their admiration to the wall and it stop to be a urinal. The reality is that members of different communities worship gently at the same wall signify that, a common person of the society can achieve communal harmony.

### REFERENCES:

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- 2.Mistry, Rohinton (1991). *Such a Long Journey*. London: Fibre & Fiber. p. 24.

## Perspective Of Multiculturalism In Rohinton Mistry's Such A Long Journey

3.Ibid., p.71.

4.Ibid., p.182.

5.Nehru, Pandit J. (1997). *Discovery of India*. New Delhi: Penguin. p.42.