CULTURAL IDENTITY, DIASPORA, AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S *DESIRABLE DAUGHTERS*

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ABSTRACT

Women Immigrants endeavor to leave their countries to achieve freedom, equality, and a better life and opportunity in a new country. They face unanticipated conditions of diaspora and culture shock. People have to be willing to endure or sacrifice a part of their past so that they can step into better stamina. Bharati Mukherjee examines her protagonists through a long process from the first space (Indian) to the third space (American). The protagonists face the dilemma of the modern world when they are involved with American life. Two of the three sisters change from an Indian desirable daughter to a free Indian-American woman. They are caught between past and present, tradition and modernity. They can break several traditional norms and codes, however, they do not separate themselves from Indian norms. This study scrutinizes each female protagonist through the lens of the post-colonial transcultural theories primarily by Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha. The female's attitudes and actions are examined through the key concepts of Ambivalence and Difference, Hybridity, and Third Space. The three sisters have different ways of thinking, behavior, and decision-making which direct their futures, therefore, the writer offers two options: rejection or hybrid identity. Parvati rejects the new culture, and Padma and Tara accept both, the new culture(American) and the old one (Indian), but at different levels.

KEYWORDS: *Ambivalence, Bharati Mukherjee, Cultural Identity, Diaspora, Difference, Hybridity, Postcolonial, Third Space.*