

## STUDY ON RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA'S FICTION FEATURES CULTURAL CLASHES



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### ABSTRACT

It was Ruth Prawer. Jhabvala Prawer was the daughter of Marcus and Eleonora Prawer and was born on May 7th, 1927 in the city of Cologne, Germany. Her family traced their roots to Germany, Poland, and Jewish Europe. She arrived in England in 1939, was naturalised as a British citizen in 1948, and graduated with a "Master of English" degree from Queen Mary College in London in 1951. Her year of arrival in England was 1939. She eventually settled down in India after marrying C. H. S. Jhabvala, an architect from that country. Jhabvala developed a

genuine connection to the nation, although one that was fraught with tension. She has had the extraordinary experience of witnessing the subcontinent from the fortunate position of an insider but through the eyes of an outsider because to the fact that her husband is Indian and all three of her children, Renana, Ava, and Feroza, were born in India. Therefore, she draws inspiration for her scripts, books, and tales from the idea of being rooted in a culture and people because this is a topic that she is very familiar with.

**Keywords:** features, cultural, clashes, themes

## INTRODUCTION

The author has made several trips back to India, which is known for its ancient knowledge and its ability to maintain spiritual harmony. Her experiences with the swarms of young tourists from other countries that flocked to India in the 1960s, only to be used by dishonest 'mystics,' served as inspiration for books like *Three Continents* and other similar works. Throughout point of fact, the idea of religious frauds is present in a significant portion of Jhabvala's body of work. Although Jhabvala would spend three months of each year in New Delhi, she made her permanent home in New York in 1975. There, she lives in close proximity to her film industry friends and colleagues, the partnership known as Merchant-Ivory. Her collaboration with the group on screenplays for movies, which began in the 1960s, contributed to the development of her writing style as a fiction author and expanded her perspective. One way to look at it is that the author's relocation to New York marked the beginning of the second significant effect on her body of work, which resulted in the publication of her collection of short tales titled *East into Upper East: Plain Tales from New York and New Delhi* (1998). The *New Yorker* would frequently get contributions from Jhabvala.

Jhabvala's short stories took on a darker tone over the decade of the 1970s. Some of her characters, such as the protagonist in the title tale of *An Experience of India*, want to get away from the world by following spiritual leaders. Other characters, such as the minister in the story "An Experience of India," don't want to get away from the world at all.

Others, like "Rose Petals" from the same collection, have aspirations of bettering society, while others, like the minister's wife, devote their lives to entertaining themselves. "Rose Petals" is part of the same collection. The protagonists in *East into Upper East* face the same challenges in their lives, regardless of where they live—New Delhi or New York City, for example. Even if these latter stories sometimes conclude without a resolution, there is still joy to be found in the stories' creative excellence.

Although Ruth Praver Jhabvala is most known for her novels, she is also a skilled writer of short stories, screenplays, and essays, in addition to being a novelist. Her collections of short tales include *How I Became a Holy Mother and Other Pieces* (1976), *How I Became a Holy Mother and Other Stories* (1976), *An Experience of India* (1971), and *Like Birds, Like Fishes and Other Stories* (1963). *Out of India* (1986) is a selection of stories from these volumes.

Her most well-known screenplays are for the movies Shakespeare Wallah (1965; co-written with James Ivory), Heat and Dust (1983), and A Room with a View (1986; adapted from E. M. Forster's novel).

The early stories written by Jhabvala capture the sense of wonder that the author expresses in her narrative "Myself in India" as a Westerner's initial reaction upon arriving in India. Jhabvala, who has been likened to Jane Austen by a number of reviewers, places an emphasis on the comedic aspects of family life in this work; yet, she does lampoon self-deception, elitism, or pretentiousness.

The characters Jhabvala creates make it through most of their ordeals relatively undamaged. For instance, the narrator in "My First Marriage," which can be found in *Like Birds, Like Fishes and Other Stories*, thinks that the fact that she was abandoned and seduced are only two of the many things that make her more intriguing.

### **A BACKWARD PLACE: A SYNOPSIS**

The beginning of the second phase of her career, which consisted of dark and despairing comedies that portrayed a world that was out of joint, was marked by the publication of *A Backward Place*. Jhabvala began to focus more of his attention on the contacts between the East and the West, as well as the tensions and ironies that arose from such encounters, in this work as well. This is something that he continued to do in subsequent works as well. The title of the book, which is a reference to a European character's superior assessment of Delhi, relates to the pervasive irony of the novel; neither Indians nor Europeans are spared Jhabvala's derision. The title of the book is a reference to a European character's superior judgement of Delhi. The work suffers from being extremely formulaic and is unduly focused on serving as a vehicle for satire, all while having a main character that is interesting.

*A Backward Place* portrays, in essence, three distinct Western perspectives on India through its three primary protagonists: Judy affirms, Etta negates, and Joey blends both of these perspectives.

Clarissa appears ambivalent. The use of style in "A Backward Place" analyses the status of both the characters and the author with regard to a person who is culturally attuned to two or more worldviews. It is possible for the creative diversity and mastery of a language to become a gauge of a society's level of intellectual advancement (as measured by the logical criteria of the West), while at the same time pointing backwards.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ramya d 2020 As the younger generation desired to follow western culture, Indian tradition, culture, and value patterns went through various stages. In the face of multiple economic, social, and industrial forces, the unified family is disintegrating. Even the urban Indian society wished to preserve the closeness of its familial bonds. The environment and the tradition become irreconcilable. Between Indian and Western cultures, there is a persistent socioeconomic cultural gap. The fundamental values upheld in the family should not be compromised by social or cultural independence.

The study for Fadillah Fatima (2015) looks at how Ruth Praver Jhabvala uses a dual framework of Hindu philosophy and religious tradition and platonic thought on love to enhance the ironic narrative of her Indian and Western novels. Jhabvala writes from the ironic perspective of the rootless, displaced European writer. The framework can be found in references to the Bhagavad Gita, the Symposium, moral principles, values, cultural standards, myth, and folktales, as well as in fluid suggestions and associations.

Raphael Malik (2018) The study analyses how many hidden themes may be found in Anita Desai's and Ruth Praver Jhabvala's novels. The novels are frequently read and reread, anytime with different angles, to unravel the interwoven themes and to learn more about society and the literary world in particular. For literary critics, the novels bring up a lot of possibilities. The concept of diversity and multicultural conflicts are two topics that the researcher has attempted to study in relation to the works of Anita Desai and Ruth Praver Jhabvala. The 20th and 21st centuries are known as the "period of globalisation and liberalisation."

In her paper, Dr. Sarika Tyagi (2017) compared the novels "Journey to Ithaca" by Anita Desai and "A New Dominion" by Ruth Jabaal in light of the intercultural topic. Ruth and Desai examine the crucial phases of Indian English literary development in their studies. Further observation reveals that a previous Polish-Jewish author who had lived abroad had written about her time in England, India, and the United States as a cross-cultural theme. However, the theme of her literary works dominates. Desai, who was just ten years younger than other novelists, makes an effort to expand on numerous problems in a few of her works. This is discussed along with how she spent time in the United States throughout the 1990s and her mixed Indo-German background. Furthermore, it should be highlighted that comparative study of novels concentrated primarily on the subject of "spiritual India," even though it was seen through the lens of western men and women depicted in the works.

Sharma, Ashish (2013) Here, we've tried to concentrate on Jhabvala's writings, who holds a notable position among authors in the Indo-Anglian literary landscape, particularly on her

writing style and how she treats female characters. Jhabvala shows a remarkable variety of experience and imagination in recognising the reality of her surroundings while exercising her creative abilities with uncommon insight. In her novels, Jhabvala paints an egregiously realistic portrait of the post-independence social and familial landscape of urban India.

### **THEMATIC CONCERNS IN THE NOVELS OF RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA**

The environment in which we live and the society in which we find ourselves are mirrored in the works of literature that have come before us. The authors of nearly all types of literature make an effort to explicate the intricacies of the human condition by portraying characters in a wide range of diverse guises. This is done so that readers may better understand the complexity of the human condition. It is generally agreed that the establishment of the East India Company marks the beginning of Indian English literature, which can look back on a long and distinguished history in the nation of India. In the year 1608, Mughal Emperor Jahangir gave permission to the British Naval commander William Hawkins to construct a harbour that would be permanent. The importance of the English language was recognised by the East India Company as the company expanded its holdings into the southern peninsula as it expanded its domain.

The vast bulk of Indian English literature produced by women is centred on themes that are connected to various aspects of the lives of women. Gender issues, female exploitation and oppression, the concept of being "other" in a patriarchal society, the theme of growing up from childhood to womanhood, liberation through self-quest, sexual autonomy, human relationships, realism, magic realism, fantasy, the image of "new-women," Indian culture, urbanisation, Indianness, migration, and East-West encounter are some of the topics that are addressed in these works.

It is clear from the numerous prestigious critical awards that Indian women novelists writing in English have garnered in recent years that they have established a place for themselves in the world of literature as a result of the adaptable narrative techniques and one-of-a-kind topics that they investigate. This is evidenced by the fact that the awards have been given out in recent years. They have been given prestigious awards such as the Booker Prize, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book (Eurasian section), and the esteemed Sahitya Academy Award, which unquestionably establishes that women novelists are no longer 'others' in the Indian English literary scenario. Examples of these awards include the Booker Prize and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book (Eurasian section). Among the many other honours they have received, one of the most prestigious is the

Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the Best First Book (Eurasian section).

In India, Kamala Markandaya is regarded as a significant author. She is considered to be a part of the pioneering group of women authors in India's first generation. Her success may be ascribed to both the sensitive approach in which she addresses themes that cross cultural barriers and the sincere manner in which she represents the cultural context of India. Both of these aspects contribute to the authenticity of her portrayal. Her whole body of work is centred on issues such as the conflict that results when modernity and tradition come into conflict with one another, as well as the conflict that results when values collide. *Pleasure City* (1982), which was her only novel to be published after 1980 and was also her final novel to be published, is quite similar to many of her earlier works and was the only novel she ever had published after 1980.

### **CULTURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

Culture, in point of fact, appears to be a multi-accented phrase with a convoluted past that is still subject to interpretation, which itself symbolises the complexity of general human history. This phrase has been used to refer to anything that is developed and practised in society, including but not limited to traditions, arts, social institutions, literature, music, etc. Therefore, culture has become the domain of a more expansive human consciousness that is both formed and moulded by society, religion, history, and geography. This is the case since culture has evolved over time. Because culture may relate to such a wide variety of things and because it is referenced much too frequently, it has, by this point, developed a reputation for being a contentious topic within the field of socio-anthropology.

Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their expression and guide their actions; such actions are organically associated with the structure of the society and the people. Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings guide their activities. According to E. B. Tylor, "Culture or civilization is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." [Culture or civilization] is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

The fields of anthropology, literature, and sociology each provide their own unique perspectives to the study of culture. In the 19th century, the concept of culture as "people's whole way of life" initially appeared for the first time. Matthew Arnold believed that the

finest of what has been "thought and known" in the world might be found in culture. Arnold contends that "culture is a pursuit of our whole perfection by means of learning to know, on all the subjects which most interest us, the finest which has been thought and uttered." Arnold, who has taken the traditionalist position throughout this exchange, distinguishing between high and low culture, shows a profound regard for the past. He is of the opinion that to do so would be to taint the holiness; to uproot the traditions that were handed down from their ancestors.

regressing into obscurity and chaos in reverse. Tradition, in his view, is where civilization may be traced back to its beginnings. In the field of anthropology, the term "culture" refers to the man-made component of the natural environment. In common parlance, a man of culture is one who is fluent in a language that is not his native tongue, who is knowledgeable about history, literature, philosophy, and fine art, and whose actions and behaviours are controlled and guided by wisdom and judgement. However, according to the perspective of anthropologists, to be human is to be cultured. Because people in various parts of the world follow a variety of diverse lifestyles, the world is home to a wide variety of distinct cultures, including Russian, Indian, Nepali, American, British, Chinese, and others. The term "religion," "art and morality," "poor clothes," and "any other talents and habits acquired by man as a member of society" are all examples of what Sir Edward Tylor included in his definition of culture.

## **CULTURAL IDENTITY**

During the 1990s, the concept of identity emerged as the primary focus of attention in the field of historical research as well as cultural studies. However, in the field of cultural studies, identities do not exist in the sense that they may be perceived. They do not possess any fundamental or general characteristics. They are rather the product of discourses or other controlled methods of communicating about the world and are constructed via the use of discourse. To put it another way, identities are manufactured rather than discovered via the process of representation. In the words of Balibar, "identification is never a quiet acquisition; it is claimed as a guarantee against a danger of destruction that can be figured by 'another identity' or by a 'erasing of identities.'"

Every identity that is asserted is developed as a result of the other identities that are present. To suggest that identity is a language of tradition is a more accurate description of the phenomenon. It is a "production" that is never finished, constantly in progress, and is formed

from inside, rather than by representation from the outside. According to Hall's argument, there are at least two distinct ways of thinking about an individual's cultural identity. "Cultural identity" is defined, according to the first perspective, as a form of collective, "one true self" that individuals who have a common culture have.

Within the confines of these definitional parameters, history and ancestry share similar ground. In this regard, Hall makes the following argument: "Cultural identities represent the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as our own people, with stable, unchanging, and ongoing frames of reference and meaning". Along with the points of commonality, cultural identity also contains the essential points of profound and substantial diversity, which together create who or what we actually are, or more accurately, who or what we have been. One cannot speak at length and with any degree of precision about one's own experience or identity without addressing the other side of that experience or identity. This is the second concept of cultural identity that Hall holds dear to him. In the second use of the term, he contends that cultural identity is an issue not just of "being," but also of "becoming." It is just as much a part of the present as it is of the past. It is not something that has always been there, unaffected by changes in location, time, history, or culture. The origins and histories of cultural identities can be found elsewhere. But just like everything else that has historical significance, they are subject to ongoing change.

## **ACCULTURATION**

In the face of altering global tendencies, acculturation has emerged as one of the most important ways in which cultures communicate with one another. It is a term that refers to the process by which many cultural characteristics and complexity are altered as a result of the continual contact between other cultures, which results in the formation of hybrid cultures and cultural identities as well as a multicultural society. Acculturation is a term that refers to the process that takes place when two or more groups of people who originate from distinct cultural backgrounds interact with one another over an extended period of time, leading to modifications in the traditional cultural practises of one or both of the groups. Each culture has a codified and exhaustive set of instructions for matters pertaining to behaviour, and the history of each civilization may be summarised in terms of a particular collection of values, beliefs, and customs. These interactions can range "from domestic contacts to global interaction" and "between hegemonic western culture and developing non-western societies." Cultural interactions are the result of prolonged contact between two or more sets of values



and norms, which can be very different from one another.

Following this, there is the potential for collaboration or rivalry between different civilizations. In the first scenario, there is the possibility of an exchange and mutual support, whereas in the second scenario, there is the possibility of animosity and conflict. The second possibility is the one that comes up most frequently. Acculturation is a process that almost never occurs in both directions at the same time. The majority of the time, cultural modification refers to the changes that a cultural group has to bring about in both the collective and individual behaviours of its members in order to cohabit and interact with the norms and customs of a dominant social system. In most cases, it refers to immigrants from groups that are considered indigenous or ethnic minorities. Minorities, because of the involuntary nature of the acculturation process, are almost always required to adapt to the cultural system in which they reside in order to be able to function effectively within the dominant environment and participate in its activities.

The members of the acculturating minority keep their relationships with others in their group on a high social and emotional level. They uphold their own customs, behaviours, and beliefs in their society. They develop their own distinct subculture, which is only marginally impacted by the culture of the dominant group. In this kind of scenario, interactions between the various social systems are, as a consequence, severely limited. People who are part of the group that is acculturating into the dominant culture are not recognised as legitimate members of that culture. In spite of their desire to integrate and/or become a part of the dominant group, the dominant group continues to marginalise and/or isolate them.

Individuals who are successful in acculturation are able to adopt the beliefs and behaviours that are characteristic of the dominant culture in which they live while at the same time maintaining their own customs and traditions. This form of connection with a culture that is considered to be dominant has also been given the name "biculturalism."

## **DISLOCATION**

In today's modern civilization, there have been many rifts on a global scale, as well as a fragmentation of different cultures. The phenomena known as dislocation is the result of moving from a known place to an unfamiliar one, whether the relocation was voluntary or involuntary. The fundamental concept of dislocation is given its own definition in the book *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, which reads as follows:

The phenomena may be a consequence of relocation from one nation to another as a result of

slavery or incarceration, by invasion or settlement, or as a result of moving from a known area to an unfamiliar one, either willingly or unwillingly. The term is used to describe the experiences of those who have voluntarily moved from the imperial "Home" to the colonial margin; however, it affects all those who, as a result of colonialism, have been placed in a location that, as a result of colonial hegemonic practises, needs, in a sense, to be "reinvented" in language, in narrative, and in myth.

This process of dislocation and regeneration has the potential to effect all diasporic groups, whether they were created as a result of forced or voluntary migration. Dislocation in a different sense is a trait of all invading colonies, which typically involve the dislocation or annihilation of original or indigenous civilizations. The most that can be said about it is that they are arranged in a symbolic hierarchy. This hierarchy disregards its own institutions and principles in favour of the principles and customs of the culture that colonised them.

Dislocation may also be expanded to cover the psychological and personal dislocation that results from cultural denigration as well as voluntarily selected status. This can be done by extending the definition of "dislocation." The structure of dislocation is defined by a process that never ends and has no one articulating or organising principle; rather, it is continually being displaced by force from the environment.

## **HYBRIDITY**

The notion of hybridity is one of the most extensively used and most hotly debated terms in postcolonial theory. Proponents of the concept include renowned postcolonial critics such as Homi K. Bhabha, Sara Suleri, Robert Young, and Frantz Fanon. Commonly, when people talk about hybridity, they are referring to the process of creating new kinds of transculturation inside the contact zone established by colonisation. There are many different manifestations of hybridization, including cultural, political, racial, and linguistic. Regarding the topic of hybridity, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin have written as follows: " hybridity has been seen as part of the tendency of discourse analysis to de-historicize and de-locate cultures from their temporal, spatial, geographical, and linguistic contexts, and lead to an abstract, globalised concept of the textual that obscures the specificities of particular cultural situation".

The work of Homi K. Bhabha, who examines the colonizer/colonized connections, places an emphasis on their interdependence and the mutual formation of their subjectivities. This is the most recent association that has been made between the word "hybridity" and

Bhabha's body of work. Cultural identity always originates in a paradoxical and ambiguous space, which, according to Bhabha, renders the claim to a hierarchical "purity" of cultures impossible. All cultural assertions and systems are produced in space, and that place is the third space of enunciation. The recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity may help to overcome the exploits of cultural diversity in favour of the recognition that an empowering hybridity within cultural difference may operate. This recognition may be beneficial in the effort to overcome the exploits of cultural diversity. It is significant that the productive capacities of this third space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance, as Bhabha explains further: It is significant that the productive capacities of this third space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance, as a willingness to descend into that alien territory may open the way to conceptualising an inter-national culture, as well as a diversity of cultures, but on the inscription of articulation of cultural hybridity. The 'in-between' zone is the one that bears the load in terms of the meaning of culture; this is what makes the concept of hybridity so significant. Postcolonial discourse regularly use the term to refer to straightforward cross-cultural "exchange," as well as the concept of equitable trade. Bhabha is quoted as saying that as a result of this, "there develops a new culture that is neither entirely colonised nor exclusively of westerner, it is third space of enunciation".

## HEGEMONY

The concept of hegemony, which originally referred to the predominance of a single state within a confederation, is now more commonly understood to represent dominion via consent. At its core, hegemony may be seen as the power of the ruling class to persuade other classes that the interests of the ruling class are the interests of everyone. Dominance is therefore exercised not by force, nor even necessarily by active persuasion, but by a power that is more subtle and inclusive over the economy and over state apparatuses such as education and the media. This power ensures that the interest of the ruling class is presented as the interest of the common people, and as a result, it is taken for granted that this is the case.

The term "hegemony" is useful for describing the success of imperial power over colonised people. These colonised people may vastly outnumber any occupying military force, but their desire for self-determination has been suppressed by a hegemonic notion of the greater good. This notion is frequently couched in terms of social order, stability, and advancement, all of which are defined by the colonised power. Hegemony is essential due to the fact that the ability to exert influence on the ideas and beliefs held by the colonised is, by far, the most effective

and long-lasting kind of imperial activity that can take place in territories that have been colonised. In point of fact, a "empire" is not the same thing as a group of subjects whose status is coercively controlled by a central power because of the efficacy of the empire's cultural hegemony. Interpellation of the colonised subject by imperial speech in such a way that Eurocentric values, assumptions, ideas, and attitudes are accepted as a matter of course as the most natural or valuable achieves the goal of gaining consent from the colonial subject.

The colonised subject will invariably come to embrace the importance of Eurocentric values despite the fact that they will understand themselves to be on the periphery of those values as a result of such interpellation, which has predictable repercussions.

### **CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN A BACKWARD PLACE**

This chapter focuses on the specific instances of expressions and elaborations that help to support the view that India has been acting as a place where the two cultures, western and eastern, meet. The impact of this cultural integrative communication has resulted in a variety of attitudes towards eastern culture, particularly Indian culture, among westerners themselves. The book would be investigated and analysed by applying concepts from the field of cultural studies, such as hybridity, hybridity, and identity, as well as the information provided in the prior chapter. This chapter would conduct an in-depth analysis of the text, focusing on those features that have a link with the study's hypostudy and providing supporting evidence.

A cultural text bears all the possibilities of mixed representations of cultural interchange, whether it was written during the colonial era or simply in the colonial tradition. In some texts, we find notions of European superiority and universality, and in other texts, we find the opposite. There are also some texts that choose the middle path and stand dislocated.

One interpretation of A Backward Place's cultural significance holds that the book is neither truly orientalist nor based solely upon the eastern point of view; rather, it has the quality of being in-between and is too selective in its specific details to represent Indian culture and western culture equally. This interpretation is based on the idea that the book bears the quality of being in-between. There is no need for any more clarification regarding the novel's cooperation with cultural perspective because it is too obvious.

### **INDIA: A CONTACT ZONE**

The names of Jhabvala's works frequently do not attract significant amounts of attention from critics. Even a cursory reader needs to experience how significant and suggestive these

are in order to fully appreciate them. Her book names have their own meanings as well as extensions, and they contribute both analytically and symbolically to the overarching themes and narratives of her works. Her early work, published in 1958, *A New Dominion*, and her later novel, published in 1975 and the one that earned her the renowned Booker award, *Heat and Dust*, both indicate the same thing. In the same light, the novel *A Backward Place* may appear to be so; yet, the distinction that it owns is not only the response of Westerners to India, but also the response of Indians themselves.

It may seem as though *A Backward Place* is portraying India in the manner in which it proposes, but when we really read the novel, we will see that it is not addressing India per se; rather, it is addressing the cultural playground in which ideologies are generated and played out. The novel's primary conflict may be summed up as follows: Judy, the young wife of an Indian named Bal, travels to India to live with her husband, and while there, she has two children of her own in addition to Bal's. During the course of her stay, she makes it a point to connect with two other western women who have travelled to India for a variety of reasons. One of them, Etta, despises everything that has to do with Indians, while the other, Clarissa, can't make up her mind about whether or not she likes the location she lives in. These three western characters each have a distinctive perspective and outlook on their shared location in India, which affords them the opportunity to interact with a member of the so-called "other" cultural group, the Indians.

### **ETTA: ADETA CHED CHARACTER**

Etta, the protagonist of this book by Jhabvala, has a negative attitude against India and its culture throughout the entire book. Jhabvala uses Etta to illustrate the western perspective on India. The very first line of the book conveys the mindset that she possesses.

Etta was sitting upright on her bed, supported by the pillows. She was enjoying a refined breakfast that was served to her on a tray. She was about to take a bite out of the cream cracker she was holding between her thumb and forefinger when she turned to Judy and whispered, "You ought to leave him, truly you ought." One of the laws that contemporary culture has established is that marriages, my darling, were designed to be ended in divorce.

People like Etta are the only ones capable of making a comment like that on the blissful married existence of another. Etta, who was raised in the west, thinks that getting rid of men and divorcing them repeatedly is something that should be done as a matter of course. To divorce one's husband and live a life of 'freedom' would be the most improbable event that

could ever take place in the life of a lady who has been married in India. Etta is perpetually in contrast to the Indian people, their culture, and their way of life.

And she herself has become so disconnected from the natural world that she frequently comments on how she misses it. When she looks at Judy and notices that she is losing her complexion, she asks her, "Did you go out in the sun?" She doesn't like the landscape here, she doesn't like the trees here, and she even hates the sun, which is something that must be universal, but for Etta, the sun in India is something different than the sun in Europe as she puts it promptly when she looks at Judy and notices that she is losing her complexion. That is, without a doubt, the most effective method for destroying one's complexion. She is upset because she tries to oppose India rather than being consumed by it, thus she asks, "Don't you know that the Indian sun has been put expressly into the sky to damage our complexions?" She is a victim of the Indian sun. She has an extremely negative opinion of the nation, calling it a backwards civilization with a backward morals.

#### **ADAPTATION OF ‘OTHER’ CULTURE**

In *A Backward Place*, Jhabvala questions whether or not it is possible for some Europeans to live in India and survive. Through the character of Judy, Jhabvala demonstrates that it is possible if one is willing to adopt Indian values and accept India on its own terms. This is something that Jhabvala considers while writing the novel. Jhabvala demonstrates that Westerners may continue to live in India and be successful there. They have the potential to be perceived by the Indians themselves as belonging to both the outside and the inside.

Judy, whose parents raised her with the philosophy "lock the door and don't trust no one," eventually found "love in marriage" with Bal despite the strict upbringing she had. India serves as a "shelter" for her because of the open and trusting quality of her own personality. Judy is a calm and rational person who is over her heels in love with her husband, and Bal and Judy do not have any cultural or other issues. In the marriage of Judy and Bal, neither partner is willing to give in to the other's demands but instead chooses to allow their love for one another resolve any conflicts that may arise. In this particular instance, Judy's personality is the factor that contributes to the success of her marriage. She blends in unobtrusively with the family that Bal and his brother Mukund have together. a family that lives together from of choice rather than because their children went back and forth between their homes, blending the two into one cohesive unit. There is unmistakably a sign present there. The innocence of a kid may help people get over their differences and find common ground. Both

Judy and Bal share an innocence reminiscent to that of a kid. Judy and Bal, whose union Etta believes should be dissolved, are celebrating their marriage in the pleasant Indian sun while the German couple Dr. and Mrs. Hochstadt discuss the honeymoon of the East and West.

### **CLARISSA’S AMBIVALENCE: PERSONAL DILEMMA**

Clarissa is a self-taught artist, has never been married, and aspires to the kind of ideal beauty that is abundant in India but which she is unable to achieve. She says that "Back to my beloved mountains - Nature, the simple life, that's what I need urgently; I pretty desperately need a little of that type of simple living myself" as an expression of her need to return to the highlands where she grew up. She is a representation of people from the West who have a condescending attitude. In the words of Sudhir, she belongs to the type of people who have travelled to India "First, spurred on by Romain Rolland's *Life of Vivekanda*, Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* and Everyman's edition of the *Bhagavad Gita*, and intent on a quest in which notions of soul and God played a prominent, if vague part; and how valiantly she had kept up this quest, or at least the pretence of.

The lofty abstracts that had attracted Clarissa away from her focus and into the tranquil world of the peasants of India, a world in which she neither possessed skill nor a common factor to fit in, are brilliantly summed up by this. She states that she is here in India out of conviction and idealism and that she identifies herself as a person who is seeking spiritual enlightenment. In spite of the fact that she claims to love India and has compassion for the people who live there, she is always looking for ways to improve her living situation.

Clarissa's subsequent attitude to Europe, the continent in which she was born and raised, is not one of longing but of restlessness; it is this restlessness that compels her to remain in India, the nation in which she voluntarily resides. "I adore these plain, earthy kinds," Clarissa stated. They say that every crease on a person's face has a tale to tell. It is incredibly motivating for creative people. The Indian peasant, on the other hand, naturally possesses some form of spiritual character. While she is exhibiting Etta her sketch book, she proceeds to make the following observation: "the Indian peasant has something of a spiritual quality about him, a heavenly longing which lifts him Up beyond his own earthiness". However, for her purposes as an artist, these peasants are only a source of inspiration and lifeless drawings. Because of the abstract and fictitious nature of her identification with the Indian peasant, they do not mean anything else to her. The fact that she is so idealistic stops her from identifying with other people.

## CONCLUSION

In her book, "A Backward Place," author Ruth Praver Jhabvala seems to have constructed a bizarre setting reminiscent of a fairy tale as a result of her interest with the East-West encounter and the topic of identity in relation to the Indian ethos. It may be easier for someone like her to adopt an international perspective because she has already crossed geographical boundaries by marrying an Indian artist and moving in with an Indian family. However, it is likely to be much more difficult for her to break down cultural barriers because of this. A complete assimilation into another culture necessitates either a metamorphosis or the forgetting of a previous existence, both of which are inextricably linked to the inheritance of a value system.

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