



# JOURNEY OF BECOMINGNESS IN BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S JASMINE

Roshma P.R<sup>1</sup> and Dr. R Krishnamoorthy<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. scholar, PG and Research Department of English, Government Arts College, Udthagamandalam.

<sup>2</sup>Associate professor, PG and Research Department of English, Government Arts College, Stone House Hill Post, Udthagamandalam 643002, The Nilgiris TN India.

**Abstract:** Bharati Mukherjee's novel "Jasmine" intricately weaves the narrative of its titular protagonist's journey of becomingness, which is marked by profound transformations in identity, geography, and cultural affiliations. This abstract presents a concise overview of the exploration of becomingness within the context of Mukherjee's work, analysing the factors that propel Jasmine's evolution and the broader themes it unveils.

**Keywords:** Plight, Women, Bharti Mukherjee, Jasmine

## I. INTRODUCTION

The novel traces Jasmine's life from her rural village in India to her assimilation into the diverse American society, reflecting the complexities of her journey towards self-discovery and empowerment. Her transformations are prompted by significant life events such as her immigration to the United States, her marriages, and her encounters with diverse individuals and experiences. This paper delves into the multifaceted nature of these experiences and their impact on Jasmine's evolving sense of self.

Furthermore, the abstract delves into the thematic underpinnings of "Jasmine," including issues of displacement, hybridity, and cultural negotiation. Mukherjee skilfully presents Jasmine's navigation through different identities and social contexts, highlighting the challenges and opportunities that arise as she adapts to new environments while preserving traces of her past. The narrative also grapples with the tension between individual agency and societal expectations, offering insights into the broader dynamics of immigrant experiences.

This abstract proposes to examine the concept of becomingness as a central theme in "Jasmine." Drawing upon literary analysis and cultural studies, it aims to illuminate the ways in which Mukherjee's work engages with questions of identity, adaptation, and transformation. By investigating the characters, settings, and symbolic elements within the novel, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the nuances of immigrant experiences and the intricate interplay between personal growth and external influences.

In conclusion, "Jasmine" by Bharati Mukherjee presents a compelling narrative of becomingness, wherein the protagonist's journey reflects the universal struggle to reconcile past and present, self and other. This abstract outlines the key elements of the proposed study, which aims to offer fresh insights into the novel's exploration of identity and transformation, contributing to the broader discourse on multicultural literature and immigrant narratives.

## II. LITERATURE SURVEY

The plot of *Jasmine* is one of migrating to a strange country and exile. The uprooting and re-rooting of the main character, Jasmine is evident. The story is told from the perspective of 24-year-old Jasmine, who resides in Iowa and recalls her time spent as a youngster in Hasnapur as well as her current circumstances. Even in the final pages of the book, she is still evolving; her journey has no end. Indian native Jasmine experiences numerous psychological changes as she settles in the United States. She dissociates herself from traditional Indian society. Jasmine discovers "kind ways to comment on oneself" (p. 29). Jasmine goes from being a maiden to being married, then she becomes a career.

When the young couple's young husband perishes in a terrorist bomb attack, the young daughter Jyothi changes her name to Jasmine and resolves to travel to America with his clothes to make a final sacrifice at the altar of his dreams. When she arrived in America as an undocumented immigrant, she was violated, and her Indians rebelled. After killing the individual, she moves from family to family, develops relationships, picks up names, and forms a bond with a family of refugees before ultimately deciding between Indian duty and the western quest of happiness.

Jasmine, an obedient traditional Indian wife, changes into Jase, meets Taylor, and eventually moves toward Bud to become Jane. In order for her identity to continue to change, she finally moves with Taylor and Duff. This journey of development and transition is one of optimism and positivity. She invents a new set of principles and beliefs. She strives to develop new habits, talents, and desires. The traditional Indian femininity cult is slammed in this book. Women cannot think about themselves. The story and Jasmine's becomingness both feature Jasmine's husband Prakash.

He both starts Jasmine's liberation and embodies dialogue about masculinity on the one hand. For instance, Prakash renames his wife Jasmine instead of Jyothi. Jyothi is no longer identified by her father's name; instead, she adopts her husband's creation, Jasmine. He gives a new form of city woman the Hasnapur Jyothi. He gave her the name "Jasmine" to set her history free. Jasmine is always changing who she is.

Jasmine's journey of becomingness is characterized by the creation of new identities as well as the obliteration of the previous self. She continues to create and replicate her identity. She flies to America to fulfill her husband's goals, and during this time, she underwent a makeover. Because Taylor makes her feel good about herself and accepts her for who she is, she falls in love with him.

In this episode, she expresses her over passing of foreign and her rootedness inside the American terrain, which crystallizes her self-becomingness. In Jasmine, patriarchy, exile, and women's agency are all themes. Jasmine is successful in breaking free from a gendered and racially segregated life. She is constantly renewing and reproducing her "self." Jasmine crosses racial, cultural, and gender boundaries as she changes her names and identities. Within the boundaries of America, Jasmine tells the tale of the protagonist's rebirth, metamorphosis, and reincarnation [1].

In addition to analyzing Hindu social conventions and marriage, this book also discusses the protagonist's experiences in exile and how they are related to racial and ethnic debate. Jasmine depicts a novel form of performativity known as exile performativity. Jasmine gets caught up in a web of identities, names, and locales, going from Jyothi to Jane to Jasmine and so forth. Through this book, Bharathi Mukherjee portrays the position of women in her native country.

Jasmine was raised by Hindu social norms because she was born in the Indian village of Hasnapur. She is treated as the fifth daughter and seventh kid of a traditional, low-income family. She confesses that "if (she)has been a boy (her)birth in a bountiful year would have marked (her)as lucky, a child with a special destiny to fulfill. But daughters were cursed" (p.39) [2].

If a female is born, even the mother will be cursed. It demonstrates how patriarchal rules are upheld in marriage in India by men. Marriage represents power, silence, and order to them.

Women shouldn't make decisions on their own since they are incapable of doing so. They are incapable of making decisions and lack critical thinking [3].

Indian patriarchy adheres to astrological principles. Astrology serves as a tool for enforcing women's subjugation. Even for Jasmine, an astrologer predicted his exile and widowhood when she was just 7 years old. In India, parents and the newlyweds are expected to see an astrologer to choose the best time for the wedding to take place. However, Jasmine Marriage falls short of these requirements [5].

When viewed in this light, Jasmine's identity is always changing. It transforms from one identity to another. She is always changing who she is. In actuality, Jasmine changes from being Hasnapuri Jyoti to being Prakash's Jasmine. She begins to define herself for the first time in this episode. She changes from Jasmine to Kali, a goddess of devastation, after moving to America. After meeting Lillian Gordon, Jasmine transforms into Jazzy, a person who is almost entirely American. She eventually transforms into Jase during her journey to being her true self. Finally, she resides with Bud as Jane Ripplemeyer. She disproves the notion that identity is unchangeable during these incarnations. As a result, the various changes that Jasmine has undergone and her journey of becoming her own person are covered in this section of the analysis.

The story adeptly depicts the diverse aspects of performativity related to race and gender. As a result, the analysis highlights the protagonist's experiences in exile as they become entwined within racial and ethnic discourses while also elevating the trappings of Hindu social rules and marriage. The performativity of exile is a novel sort of performativity that Mukherjee depicts in her essay. The latter forces immigrants to comply in a way that is exclusive to it. It is imperative to draw attention to how subversive these kinds of performativities are. In order to achieve these goals, the study follows the facets of Jasmine's rhizomatic identity and her journey of self-discovery as a result of her resistance to patriarchy and exile. Jasmine jumps around in terms of names, identities, and places. Her various incarnations characterize her rebellious personality because rhizomatic identity is inherently nonconformist and subversive. Jasmine uses her diversity of identities as a way to both resist and overcome racial and patriarchal discourses of fixity and self-becomingness.

### III. CONCLUSION

Jasmine makes an effort to act like a responsible adult. She enjoys reading and picking up English. She takes satisfaction in the English compositions and job applications that she writes. Jasmine wants to take part in the common everyday activities with the other women in the community. She enjoys taking care of the housework and haggling. Jasmine wants to emotionally connect with her parents. She enjoys and feels at home living with them. Every female character in the book is incredibly naive, and none ever manages to elude the harsh hand of destiny.

The story of patriarchy, exile, and female agency is told in Jasmine. It challenges the heedless practices of racial and patriarchal performativities as well as the female's removal of these social masks. Jasmine is able to break free from a racialized and gendered life that is codified. Within the confines of patriarchy and banishment, she continually negotiates and renegotiates her identity. Jasmine embraces a rhizomatic mind that transcends borders. The new mestiza who is nourishing several selves is her. As a result, the theme of the book is the protagonist's multiple identities. She is always creating new versions of herself. By assuming a new name and identity, Jasmine transcends ethnic, cultural, and gender constraints. In a nutshell, Jasmine tells the tale of the protagonist's rebirth, metamorphosis, and rebirth within American borders.

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