
**INDIANNES IN THE WORKS OF ROHINGTON MISTRY WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO *SUCH A LONG JOURNEY* AND *A FINE BALANCE*.**

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Abstract:

One could find expression of the culture of a particular country to which the author belongs whenever a literature is produced. Although the author is away from his motherland, there would be an instinct to write about his own culture and tradition. Rohington Mistry is one of the authors who belonged to this country and staying at abroad. Since 1975, he has been living in Canada but one cannot find any touch of Canada in his works. In fact, the writers who write about their motherland would portray their happy movement and bitter experiences. Ones could find both positive and negative sides about the writer's culture and tradition.

Keywords; Rohington Mistry , *Long Journey* and *A fine Balance*.

INTRODUCTION

In the novel of Rohington Mistry also the same can be found rather profusely. He has portrayed a vivid picture of Indian family – life and culture, the Indian parsi tradition attack on the political corruption and misuse of power in Indian. He has brought out the fact that people in India manage to live in a crucial condition. Of all his works, *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1995) and *Family Matters* (2002) are intimately belonged with images of Indian culture. This article focuses Indianization of his select works with special reference to above mentioned novels.

Mistry speaks about Indian family – life, culture and he tells a story rich in subject matter, characterization and symbolism in his first novel *Such a Long Journey* which is set in 1971 Bombay, when Indian went on war over what was later to become Bangladesh. This is the political context for the unfortunate events that disrupted the personal lives of kind hearted Persian, Gustad Noble and his family and friends. He skillfully parallels public events involving Indira Gandhi with the misfortune of the novel's important characters. The story of *A Fine balance* focuses on the lives of four unlikely people who find themselves living in the same humble flat in the city: a widow whose refusal to remarry has left her struggling to earn a living as a seamstress; two tailors who came to the city searching for employment and a student from a small hamlet in the Himalayan foothills, whose father has sent him to college. His descriptive,

layered account of the personal lives of turmoil, makes for an engrossing novel of epic stature. His third novel *family Matters* (2002) focuses on a Bombay based modernity Parsi family whose priorities shift when their father, a 79 year old man suffering from Parkinson's disease, breaks his ankle and is bed – ridden, forcing them to face the reality of his illness and their attitude towards it. Here, he deals with a dilemma which is only too familiar, a universal morality late filtering through the colors and smells of an overcrowded Indian apartment block.

The narrative technique is used in *Such a long Journey* and *A Fine Balance*. Gustad meets turbulent events in his life. He started his life peacefully and towards the end he moves towards peace in *Such a Long Journey*. In the same way, in *A fine Balance*, the characters move towards peace in their own way. Dina goes and lives with her brother, Om and Ishvar are reduced to the level of begging, but Meneck Kills himself. In both of the novels, one can find a kind of Mythical end. These two novels give a full picture of Youths of Indian who rebel against their parents' will, Dina is a widow, Om and Ishvar belong to a sect of people living below poverty line. In each character, India may be found and Mistry has created characters from minority community and suppressed people. Togetherness of all these characters shows how people in India live a crucial and insecure life. Throughout the novel *Such a Long Journey*, Gustad Noble, the protagonist, suffers throughout the novel. First, Gustad's son refuses to get admitted in IIT, secondly he receives a letter and a parcel from his old friend Jimmy, that ultimately leads a lot of complication. Thirdly, some mysterious disease affects his beloved daughter Roshan; finally he loses his friend Dinshawji. All these sufferings lead to Gustad's pilgrimage. Here, we find a typical kind of Indianness. The protagonist visits many places like Mount St. Mary's Christian church, Haji Baba Mosque, a Muslim pilgrim place. Whenever a person suffers, it is found that in India, he assumes religious tolerance in order to get rid of the problem. Holy places of other religions are also visited by him. The novelist gives a clear account of how people in India follow many superstitions. For example: Miss Kuptitica gives various ideas to Dilnavaz about needle and thread is one of them.

The celebrated Sohrab – Rustom myth is used in *Such a Long Journey*. Mistry's narrative ends on a note of reconciliation whereas the confrontations between father and son in the myth end on a tragic note. Gustad views Sohrab's rebellious gesture as a symptom of the loss of respect for traditions and values. What brings back Sohrab in the narrative is the strength of spirit demonstrated by Gustad after Tehmul's tragic death. Gustad is always guided by altruistic motives in his life. At the church of MT. Mary, he does not pray for himself; he wishes for Roshan a speedy recovery, prays for Dinshawji and Sohrab. Above all Mistry has chosen characters belonging to minority community such as Gustad, Jimmy, Ghulam Mohammed, Malcom etc. as the major characters in the novel. Only an India author can narrate the fight between Gustad and his neighbor Mr. Rabadi out of his experience. It is a fun. His attitude towards Rabadi ; can be seen when Sohrab speaks about Bilimoria's money, he calls him as "crazy rabid dog! My own son" (p 145). Mistry as an Indian has brought out the silly fight between neighbours. It is a realistic side of India. Mistry produced Gustad's character as a typical Indian father, for every Indian father would have dreams about his children but when they fail to fulfill their dream, they feel frustrated. In this novel, Gustad's dream is to submit Sohrab

in IIT but when Sohrab refuses to get admitted, Gustad thinks that the whole world has turned against him. This is the first trouble that Gustad faces in the novel. Mistry has brought out the conflict between father and son, which is very common in Indian families.

There is a portrayal of India in *A Fine Balance* from various directions. It is about the sufferings of the four characters due to political interference especially during emergency period. Dina Dalal, a Parsi widow, Om and Ishvar, two untouchables and Maneck a youth from border of India are the major characters. The novel is set against the background of 1975 but it also speaks about the history of India for the 75 years. Om and Ishvar are the untouchables depicted in the novel. While narrating these characters, the novelist has taken events before the Independence of India. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas about untouchability, sufferings of them, the upperclass Society (aristocratic) are vividly depicted in the novel. The novelist says that the atrocities towards the untouchables continued even after Independence, but it was in its peak during the emergency. This can be seen through the character of Thakur Dharams, who exploits the untouchables. In opening part of the novel, one can witness a suicide on a railway track, which is common in India. Mistry points before us the sorry plight of the slum dwellers, lack of peace, need for privacy, want of basic amenities which are all part and parcel of the lifestyles of Indian slum dwellers. Ishvar visits the hut of Rajaram who not only teaches them how to assume their hunger with meagre porration but also how to use the railway tracks as their toilet. He becomes their ' Good Guru'. The readers can feel the sorry state of affairs in the slums of big cities in India after seeing this wretched condition. Perhaps, in the mind of novelist there may be the slum areas of Dharavi and Kurla.

The fact is that, the people in India manage to live in such a crucial and wretched condition of all the character. Om and Ishvar are the most affected due to emergency. Maneck represents youth of India who shares how youths in India were suppressed during emergency. Avinash, a friend of Maneck, a student leader, is killed in a suspicious way. Maneck's life is disturbed by the death of Avinash. He carries the India chessboard of Avinash even while he commits suicide. But in spite of all these sufferings the novelist shows that Indians can stoically carry on with their lives. Mistry has chosen characters from minority and suppressed communities. The character of Ashraf reveals the Hindu – Muslim brotherhood. Narayan and Ishvar save Ashraf's family from rioting Hindus. Though here and there, clashes are found between Hindus and Muslims, they are linked with the bond of brotherhood. Whatever happened during 1970 is because of corruption and misuse of power in *A Fine Balance*.

Indian family affinity and hospitality is revealed in *Such a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance*. Maneck comes to Dina's house as a paying guest and behaves as if he is her son. At first, of Dina as an arrogant women but later regrets and his attitude. Maneck is rebellions against his father because he does not want to help his father in business. But Maneck's father does not want maneck to continue the family business. In the same way Ishva wants Om to get married but Om refuses. But at least he agrees to marry. Dina first refuses to live with her brother Nusswan but later, she is reconciled to him. One can find a kind of Indian family affinity amongst the minor characters such as Shankar, beggar master etc. while porfraying Shankar as a

begger, Mistry has brought into light the horrible life of beggars. Though Shankar's profession is begging, he is happy with his job. He never thinks of begging as degrading employment.

Thus, Mistry has portrayed the Indian parsi tradition and has forcefully attacked the political corruption and misuse of power in India. He describes a realistic side of India. The novelist covers whole India. His descriptive, layered account of the personal lives of turmoil, makes for an engrossing novel of epic stature.

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