

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Emergence of Modern India in Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India*

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Abstract

Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* is the replica of new India. The transforming faces of the contemporary India can be found in this novel. If poverty was the hallmark of the old India, booming prosperity has become the distinguishing features of the contemporary India. The socio-cultural values and traditional rituals have undergone drastic change. In the new India internal migration has become the big problem. Certain areas, which are urbanized, have witnessed rapid economic growth whereas villages have still been backward. In the backward communities, the same old values have become active. Yet, the wave of cultural modernity has penetrated the core fabric of the Indian society. In the new India, the gap between village and town has widened. The lifestyles of the youths have been changed by the emerging trends of western culture. Westernization seems to have made contribution to the shifting socio-economic landscape. The legacy of western modernity, technology transfer, economic liberalization and revolution in information technology have brought India in the present context. By using the perspective of technological modernity and socio-cultural modernization, the researcher asserts that *Miss New India* projects how the new India emerged from the chaos of antiquity and uncertainty.

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I. Introduction

Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* represents the emerging India of the contemporary time. The present day India is hugely transformed by technology and modernization. The global phenomenon of technology transfer and the process of modernization have introduced all aspects of the contemporary India. All traditional norms and values are gradually giving way to the new advanced western and modern values. The old generation still seeks to cling to the old moth eaten ideas and principle. The new generation is fascinated towards the emerging new trends and values. The deep- rooted culture of India is not easily likely to be displaced and damaged by the emerging values and viewpoints. Hence, conflict and clash are bound to occur between the old and the new values.

The emerging values have met fierce resistance from the rigid old values. Cultural, social, economic and religious clashes are bound to occur. Though the growing percent of literacy has facilitated the contemporary India to imbibe and assimilate the new trends and perspectives, there are still abundant symptoms of backwardness like superstition, illiteracy, religious parochialism, vestige of feudalism which have been deterring the present day India to follow on the footsteps of modernization. To justify and endorse the emergence of the present day India, the researcher makes use of the concepts of globalization, shifting cultural life, imitation of western life style, technology transfer and its effects in India, consolidation of full-fledged democracy, economic liberalization, rejection of traditional life and modernity. Particularly, technological modernity and social modernization are the advanced theoretical concepts which furnish the methodological framework of this research work. The relation between the Bangalore and individual can be known as

the relation between cultural antiquity and modernity. Tradition has no power when modernity makes on rush and inroad into the pious land of the Indian subcontinent.

The implantation of advanced technology in the mega cities like Bangalore has opened several call centers. A large number of youths have got jobs in those call centers. So youths have migrated from villages to those mega cities like Bangalore with the hope of new jobs. The new opportunities of jobs made the youths abandon their traditional lives and move towards the emerging new mode of life. The clash between father and daughter regarding to the issue of marriage has also been included in this novel. Anjali Bose does not like to marry the man chosen by her father. She wants to escape from her traditional village and go to Bangalore. Her school teacher inspires her to deny the offer of marriage and go to the big city in order to familiarize herself with the shifting gorgeous mode urban life. Even in Gauripur she is tempted to learn English language. Learning to communicate in English language enables her tread on the new platform of opportunity.

Anjali Bose or 'Angie' is introduced as a 19-year old, born in an orthodox middle class family in Gauripur – a small town in Bihar, India. This does not conclude her description, she also happens to be attractive – not the traditional Indian beauty though, very smart, ambitious, extremely fluent in English and with some streaks of rebelliousness. Her expatriate English teacher, Peter Champion identifies these characteristics of hers and encourages her to dream big beyond the almost predestined arranged marriage on the cards for her. From time to time he boosts her self-esteem and stimulates the desire in her to write her own destiny rather than watching her destiny being written silently without her consent. But finally it takes one disastrous experience in the marriage market which was enough to push her to take the extreme step of leaving the confines of her home to set off to Bangalore.

Bangalore – one of the fastest growing cities in India, the new IT hub, the land of realizing the dreams.

Anjali sets her feet on the new promising land with Peter Champion's money and his introductions to a couple of contacts of powerful people who could help her in forming small footholds. She finds herself in a huge crowd of aspirants to be call-center service agents who are given American names, taught to speak like Americans, familiarized with America's geography – in short, trained to comfortably put up the garb of a regular American for specified working hours. Her Bangalore tryst turns out to be a huge roller coaster ride where – she is seduced into the freedom and modernity that the city has to offer to its inhabitants, the trickery of one of the co-residents pushes her into troubled waters and the gloomy side of independent life does not remain alien to her.

Some of the characters in the story just add more clutter and confusion without going anywhere and give an impression of half thought-out and half-baked effort. Despite aiming to be a story reflecting the predicaments of many wannabes from small towns struggling to make it big in life, the narrative falters miserably. On many occasions it takes drastically melodramatic turns leaving the whole story line far removed from reality. The story spanning 300 odd pages bringing out the journey of Anjali Bose should have been able to establish some connection of the readers with the protagonist, on the contrary, the readers are left with no feelings whatsoever for a puzzled and lost Anjali.

Once, her father brought a nice gentleman for her. She walked with him up to a distance. When a suitable time became available to her prospective groom, he seduced her. Her seduction hastened her to quit her native place Gauripur and drift towards Bangalore. Anjali has the fierce and formidable passion for new mode of

life. Gauripur has confined her. She felt increasingly hassled and irritated by the limitations of traditional lives in Gauripur. She felt largely suffocated by the burden of tradition. Moreover, her teacher Peter Champion fomented fervent hope and ambition in Anjali. He excited her to envy the glamorous life in Bangalore. It was he who implanted in her the feminist ideas, and advanced way of life. Fascinated by the advanced western ways of life, she goes to Bangalore. It was Peter Champion who gave many clues to her about where to live in Bangalore, how to improve English pronunciation, how important correct English pronunciation is to get a job in call centers in Bangalore. Moreover, it was Peter Champion, her English teacher in Gauripur, who warned her not to fall into the trap of marriage without tasting the fruit of Bangalore lives. On the one hand, Anjali Bose was forced by the power of tradition to obey her parents' decision.

In the current Bengali culture, the trend of marriage has been gradually changing. Several marriage bureau and marriage advertisement agencies have been established to facilitate modern youths' quest for suitors and live partners. However traditional Bengali culture and lives might be, it too is affected by the fever of modernism. When a suitor seduced her under the pretension of marrying her, her new eyes were opened. This new awareness hastened her to go to Bangalore. One night, she left Gauripur, her parents, and her friends. Leaving a goodbye letter to her parents she went to Patna where her eldest sister Sonali was living. Expecting certain help from Sonali, Anjali went to Patna. Anjali told Sonali everything that had happened between her and Subodh Mitra whom her father took as ideal suitor. Contrary to her expectation, Sonali said that it was a great mistake of Anjali to quit the house. At that time of her talk with Sonali, Anjali Bose came to know a couple of things regarding her sister. Sonali was divorcee. Her husband had left her. Sonali had been living with

her daughter. To earn her daily bread, she was engaged in small work in an office. Her office boss had been exploiting her sexually. Cultural lives of Bengali are increasingly infected by emerging western values, and styles. The integrity of marriage has fallen apart due to youths' mounting fascination towards the western norms and values which endorse individualistic society. When Anjali got no help from her eldest sister Sonali, she made entry into Bangalore.

Bangalore is the capital of information technology. Huge technological change has occurred in it. It has become the hub of economic activities and technological transfer. It is no less than the representative financial center. Several economic opportunities are available for those migrants like Anjali who go there from their respective villages. For the youths like Anjali, Bangalore represents the highest form of advanced modern life. Greater degree of individual freedom is easily available for those who go there. There is no restriction and burden of tradition in Bangalore. Bangalore is heading towards the heavy technocratization and industrialization. Urbanization and demographic expansion are two biggest phenomena which claim to have transformed the fate and future of those who dwell in Bangalore. Old norms and values have gradually giving way to the emerging new values and fashions. There is the prospect of earning a lot by working in call-centers as call-center agents. The standard of life will undergo paradigm shift ever since a person begins to swim along with the currents of Bangalore life. The following extract throws spotlight on the growing economic prospects and chance for an individual and the effect of the economic betterment on the standard of life:

She did not relate to Dynamo's allusions to films or literature, but she was stirred by the evocation of the reckless, even violent energy. If so many thousands –so many lakhs- had made the same decision she had,

to come to Bangalore and start life over, and if she could regain her self-confidence and retain her stamina, then she had nothing to fear. She had good English and a quick smile. She had Peter Champion's two friends to count on. He had promised to write to them about her. From her curbside Samsonite perch, she could see scooters, auto-rickshaws, and bright new cars clogging every roadway, many of them driven by girls her age or younger. (81)

The massive opportunity of earning a lot of money and the joy of living a free life unhindered by the burden of matrimony had pushed her from Gauripur and brought her to this mega metropolitan city of Bangalore. The fantasy of new thing, new life, new sense of freedom and the longing for the glamour of modernity put her conscience and curiosity on the metropolitan trail.

Bangalore represents what the present day India has achieved in the field of information technology, business enterprise and urbanization. It is no less than the topmost business centers of the world. It has the power to produce the butterfly effect in the global business. It symbolizes the booming economy of the current India. In Bangalore, several cultural, social, religious, and ethnic barriers have dissolved. A kind of broad-mindedness and cosmopolitan outlook has emerged in the metropolitan area of Bangalore. Each and every skill of an individual is sellable in the glamorous world of Bangalore. Bangalore is the metonymy of India. The progressive movement of Bangalore is the progressive march of India.

Mukherjee has represented Bangalore in such a way that Bangalore is India and India is Bangalore. It embodies the modernist and advanced lives towards which many youths are fascinated. India is changing in many respects. The beneficial and regressive impact of globalization has pervaded throughout India. The grace of

economic liberalization has transformed the complexion of the present day India. The gigantic phenomenon of technology transfer and assimilation have added momentum to the pace and progress of India. India is the greatest global power who can lead the entire globe in the direction of full-fledged democracy. Similarly, India has attracted colossal amount of foreign capital and a large amount of multi-national companies. The entry of foreign capital and multi-national companies has put India on the pedestal of global recognition.

Since the last few decades India has projected itself into the arena of global politics. In the decade of nineties India conducted nuclear test. Though the international community condemned the atomic test conducted by India and imposed economic sanction on it, India continued to exert its influence on the different sections of global economy. The sanction imposed by the Anglo-American countries rather affected them. Indian economy continued to flourish despite economic embargo. The emergence of India as the nuclear power has boosted the pride of all the people of India. The nuclear strength of India forced the global community to admit India as the indomitable political power.

In the early decade of the twenty first century India emerged as the flourishing superpower in the field of business, trade, commerce, and entrepreneurial mercantilism. The increasing economic growth rate and the rising tempo of industrialization have raised India from the pre-industrial feudalistic structure to the superb technological structure of late capitalist society. The concept of industry has penetrated each and every section of Indian society. So many industries have flourished. These industries are music industry, film industry, fashion industry. In the field of information technology India has achieved monumental success. Corporate culture has reached the climax of its evolution. The fervor of late capitalist enterprise

and post-enlightenment exercise have arrived at the landmark position of public appreciation.

One of the India beauties has won the miss world pageant. In terms of beauty also, India has represented and led the world. The cultivation of decent paradigm of growth and the formation of transformation friendly model of cultural lives have presented India as the gorgeous country capable of leading not only the Indian subcontinent but the entire world. All these sorts of changes and progresses which happened in Bangalore are witnessed by Anjali in the novel *Miss New India*. Anjali comes to know that Bangalore has the capacity to transform the life of an individual with a short span of time. Even Anjali is amazed at the miraculous power of Bangalore to enrich and impoverish the life of an individual. Bangalore can open the gateway of prosperous and glamorous life and it can reduce life to the bare level of misery and servitude. It can push an individual to the destination of autonomy. Or it can drag an individual from the level of stability to the level of loneliness and alienation.

Anjali had gone to Bangalore in order to avoid the burdensome fate of getting married to a man named Mr. Mitra, a man chosen by her father. Mr. Mitra's lecherous and seductive advance made her to quit her village named Gauripur. Moreover, her English instructor Peter Champion had also suggested her to taste the forbidden fruit of Bangalore. Driven by all these obstacles, Anjali Bose came to live in Bangalore. She takes shelter in Bagehot residence. There in Bagehot residence she befriends many ladies like Tookies, Husseina and Sunita. She receives good treatment and response from them. She happens to develop intimacy with Mr. GG. She submits letter of application for the job of a call-center agent in different call-centers. It is there in Bangalore that she comes to realize the importance of refined skill of

communicative English. Her friends advised her to keep two boy friends at the same time.

The idea of keeping two boyfriends at the same time puzzled her. But the fever and fervor of Bangalore life infected her in a fierce way. She chooses to immerse in the glamour and glitter of metropolitan life. Thinking that her friendship with Husseina will enable her to enter into the innermost corner of metropolitan magnificence, she developed a close acquaintance with her. Later on she comes to know that Husseina is a terrorist. Husseina is solely responsible for a terrorist explosion in Heathrow airport. That is why the Hindu fundamentalists invaded and vandalized the Bagehot paradise. The destruction of Bagehot Paradise, which is the pride of Minnie Bagehot, paralyzed her. Unable to overcome the sporadic destruction of her pride, Minnie lost her life. Later on it was confirmed that Minnie Bagehot collapsed due to heart attack. But the reckless and insensitive police suspected Anjali that she is the real murderer of Minnie Bagehot. She was detained in the custody. There was nobody to speak in favor of her. She was innocent. She did not have involvement in this act of destruction. She was far from Gauripur. Her parents were far away from her. In Bangalore she was alone. Her father had already died. Her mother was living the life of a helpless burden with her divorcee sister Sonali. She was harassed extremely by the cops and the detective spy. The police in the custody called her a prostitute. They asked her how she can live this kind of glamorous life if she does not have job and no relatives of her. She felt really stigmatized and psychologically harassed. She imagined how quickly Bangalore has altered the glow of her life into the nightmare and anarchy. She felt broken—hearted and miserable. She realized the mistake of disobeying her father. She is contrite for her radical move in her life. She is so depressed that it was impossible for her to asset and affirms her

life. At that very moment, her friend Mr. GG came and convinced that she is an inhabitant in Bagehot residence. He convinced that she is an innocent girl who has come to Bangalore from Gauripur in search of better chance and better life.

Convinced by Mr. GG, the police officer let Anjali go out of the custody. This bitter experience of harassment and inferiorization taught her about what Bangalore can do and what it can't. She is amazed at how Bangalore has quickly brought so much transformation in her life. She was alleged with a charged of having involved in the group of Islamic fundamentalists and terrorist. It is through Mr. GG's support that she got deliverance from the depressing interrogation and stigmatic act of self immolation.

She had never guessed that such terrorist activities and destructive acts of public vandalization can happen in this beautiful and gorgeous city like Bangalore. The intense possibility of the eruption of violence and terror shocked her. Certain degree of change came in her. To her, it seemed that Bangalore is not as secure as it seems to be and as it appears to be. Her original perception regarding Bangalore underwent drastic change. Anjali pondered upon the fact that the city does not welcome a single and helpless lady. She was forced to take the support of a male partner. She wondered why Mr. GG helped her so eagerly. She understood that there is reason for his active form of support and help. Mr. GG had intended to take sexual advantage from Anjali. She knew his selfish motive of using her. But she can't do anything except relying upon his help in getting a job without which she can't survive. To save herself from being engulfed by this hungry city she has to tread on the same path which she inwardly dislikes.

There is the danger of being sidetracked from the virtuous life. But she is compelled to tread on the same path which her conscience forbids. She thought again

and again and finally concluded that she is far removed from the core self which she had inherited from her ancestral village, Gauripur. She herself expressed how much change is brought in her life. There is no possibility of returning to Gauripur. She is bent upon struggling for future despite the monstrosity set by the Bangalore. To her Bangalore is promising, fast, promising, technologically well-equipped. It is the land of dream, fulfillment and opportunity. At the same time, it is monstrous. It is prone to sporadic violence and vandalization. It has been the volatile city of nightmare. To the continuous progress of Bangalore, there are lots of elements of antiquity which seek to block the progressive march of India. Despite some of the hurdles and obstacles, India is rising. It is rising in term of economy, nuclear power, technology, cultural assimilation and even in the field of political culture.

Nations are narratives. Every country is shaped by its particular set of ideas and myths. Inevitably these are simplifications, often clichés, but they hold a country together, imposing certain coherence on diverse populations. The narrative of modern India has changed over the last few decades. For much of its post-independence history, India epitomized the concept of the Third World. It was a land of desolate poverty and immutable hierarchy — “an area of darkness,” in the memorable title of V. S. Naipaul’s first book about the country; a place of “heat and dust,” in the only slightly less dismal title of Ruth Praver Jhabvala’s 1975 novel. But now India is moving on, and so is the Indian narrative. The country has grown rapidly since the early 1990s, when its stultified socialist economy began to be reformed. Today, as India has become an increasingly confident world power, the old stories are being replaced by new ones — many equally clichéd — about boundless opportunity, tremendous wealth, social mobility and technological prowess.

Bharati Mukherjee's eighth novel indulges in many of these new clichés. The heroine of *Miss New India* is a young woman, Anjali Bose, who escapes the constrictions of small-town Bihar, one of India's most backward states, for the promise of Bangalore, one of the country's (and the world's) fastest growing cities. There she works at a call center, falls in love, meets dynamic young entrepreneurs and marvels at the fortunes being made all around her. She encounters her share of hardships — police brutality, real-estate sharks — but ultimately succeeds in reinventing herself.

As its title suggests, then, *Miss New India* is a kind of parable for the new nation. This parable is not without its pleasures: Mukherjee's writing can be evocative, even poetic. Her descriptions of Anjali's cultural dislocation are often marked by a keen psychological acuity. The problem is that the novel's plot unfolds in an almost wholly predictable manner. Mukherjee's often fine prose style is ill-served by a certain thematic and narrative conservatism, an apparent inability to look beyond the received and by now broadly disseminated platitudes that have come to define the "New India" (itself something of a platitude, since the nation remains a churning and often bewildering mix of the old and the new, the archaic and the modern).

Mukherjee's tendency to rehash conventional wisdom is most evident in her descriptions of Bangalore, a city that in the popular imagination, both domestic and foreign, has come to represent something of an ur-metaphor for 21st-century India. Mukherjee's Bangalore (or "Bang-a-Buck," as one character insists on calling it) is an all-too-familiar caricature. It is "roaringly capitalistic," "the new center of the universe," a "go-for-broke, rule-bending, forget-about-yesterday, and let's-blow-it-all" place populated by tech-savvy, "hyper confident" young Indians who speak in

exaggerated American accents and have replaced the abstemiousness of an earlier generation with the titillations of casual sex, alcohol and nightclubs.

These portrayals aren't wholly inaccurate. (Although the book does contain the occasional error: Starbucks, a company whose "wondrous" logo excites visions of sophistication in Anjali, has not yet set up shop in India.) Bangalore is indeed an impressive place, but Mukherjee's shining, prosperous version of the city is a gross simplification, a tiny slice of the modern Indian experience. It is also a little facile in a country where millions remain hungry and in poverty, and where a majority is still shut out from the tremendous wealth and opportunity being seized by tiny elite.

Fortunately, the novel improves as Mukherjee shifts her attention from social commentary to the particulars of Anjali's experiences in Bangalore. In earlier novels like *Jasmine* and *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee has written movingly about the migrant experience, and she is clearly on familiar (and firmer) ground when charting Anjali's struggle to orient herself in a world unlike the one she has known before. Anjali's complexity, gradually revealed as the novel progresses, belies the predictability and superficiality of the fictional landscape she inhabits.

"She'd seen this movie a hundred times," Mukherjee writes early on, soon after Anjali arrives in Bangalore. It's an apt — if curious — summary of the novel as a whole, which often feels a little rehearsed a recitation of the middle-class fantasies and myths that have increasingly defined India. That kind of mythmaking is well suited to the project of nation building. The tremendous optimism and energy of modern India are to a significant extent strengthened by the country's self-regarding illusions. But literature should go deeper — below the surface of conventional wisdom, beyond the simple stories that nations like to tell themselves.

Well, Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* reveals to American readers a similar truth about India, with similar effect. Anjali Bose, a Bengali girl from a less than thriving town in central India, rejects the prospect of an arranged marriage after suffering rape and humiliation by a suitor. She feels as though she is, as Mukherjee puts it: Part of the bold new India, and equal to the anywhere, a land poised for takeoff. Anjali is certainly ready to take off. With the help of an expatriate teacher, she heads to Hindi-speaking Bangalore. Her new home, a call center metropolis, sports a breed of young men and women whose English she can scarcely understand. She settles into a rented space in the sprawling, decaying home of an elderly British matron and finds her new life - as Angie not Anjali - more and more enlightening and attractive. All of her call center friends work hard to sound American. Novelist Mukherjee doesn't have to do that. She's made a thoroughly American novel about her former nation that proves with serious dramatic verve and passion that going home again may be difficult for any of us.

Bharati Mukherjee is the leading Indian writer of India who writes prolifically about the themes of Diaspora and immigration in English language. She has already presented herself as the controversial writer who champions individual freedom of a woman at the cost of the grace of ethical ideals and moral decorum. Almost all the female characters in her novels are overtly conscious of freedom and individual selfhood. Typically Bengali culture and customs are nicely represented by Mukherjee in her novels. She presents the subject matter from the perspective of highly westernized perspective of Diasporas. Most of the characters in her novels are unnecessarily delicate, over sensitive, short-tempered, whimsical and irritating. They are prone to endure social label and calumny. Commenting upon the distinguishing

hallmark of Bharati Mukherjee's genius, Linda Leith makes the following observation:

Bharati Mukherjee's territory is cultural shock. Born in Calcutta, she has been chronicling the traumas of displacement for more than four decades. She is a marvellously accomplished writer, and her new novel represents not only a new departure but also the latest instalment in a substantial and satisfying body of work. For readers new to Mukherjee's fiction, this is a rich vein to mine. (12) Linda Leith has introduced the distinguishing features of the novelist. According to Leith, Mukherjee chronicles the issue of cultural shock and displacement and the subsequent problem of trauma. Besides the novelist has another charm which comes from her writing style.

Kishor Desai is one of the representative critics of Bharati Mukherjee. He has concentrated upon the formalistic aspect of Bharati Mukherjee's novels. He has offered the following stand on *Miss New India*:

Miss New India is a puzzling novel. On the one hand, it entertainingly skims through India's post-liberalization generation, star-struck by foreign brands, stumbling towards the Holy Grail of mega bucks and quick success, deserting the debris of values and ethics. On the other, India has changed so rapidly in the past few decades that Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* is already Miss Old India. As a piece of contemporary fiction, it fails to capture India's zeitgeist, or authentically voice the emerging small-town girl. (21)

Anjali Bose, the attractive Bengal-born, but Bihar-bred girl from Gauripur, is nearly destroyed by the Bangalore bonanza of call centers. Her eventual disgraceful denouement, finally, forces her to gather her jumbled thoughts and scattered dignity,

teetering back onto her rosy-pink high heels, ready to conquer the world once more. *Miss New India* is a modern amoral fairy tale, displaying the same anything is possible flamboyance as the virtual world its characters seek to inhabit.

Atul Sen has made the following disclosure regarding to the position of this novel in relation to the other novels by the same author:

You don't have to have read either *Desirable Daughters* or *The Tree Bride* in order to enjoy *Miss New India*, but the new novel is so good and written so beautifully that you will want to read its predecessors too. If the trilogy chronicles a rich and complex history that reaches across distant continents and eras, *Miss New India* not only makes sense of India's digital age; it brings worlds of tradition and change together in ways that illuminate each. The new novel presents a compelling account of young people washing up in the call centres, coffee shops and bars of today's Bangalore. There are no scenes here set anywhere outside India, but American culture and values have never played a bigger role in Mukherjee's work than they do here. (41)

And Mukherjee herself has never seemed younger than she does in *Miss New India*. She gets it all right. Anjali's need for friends, for a boyfriend, for a cell phone and for a safe and affordable place to live turns out to be the Raj-era mansion where she boards under the controlling eye of Minnie Bagehot the call centre female owner. Anjali is taught how to handle irate call-centre customers and how to neutralize her accent. She adopts American music and slang and she invents an American biography for herself.

The paperback criticism of the book has advertized the following aspect of the author's talent:

Miss New India is the final volume of a magisterial trilogy, and it tells the coming-of-age story of Anjali (or Angie) Bose, a young woman attracted by the bright lights of Bangalore. The catalyst is rape by the man her parents have chosen as her husband, but the influence of a well-intentioned American teacher, Peter Champion, has already had her dreaming of a brighter future in India's IT capital. Characters' names connect the old India and the new, and also help to distinguish between the two. In Mukherjee's fiction, Tara is a favourite name. The Tara Banerjee Cartwright of the early novel, *The Tiger's Daughter*, finds herself struggling on a visit home to Calcutta, while the Tara Chatterjee of *Desirable Daughters* and *The Tree Bride* is a central character in the trilogy. (54)

Like Mukherjee herself, Chatterjee is a Calcutta-born novelist living in San Francisco. She has everything to do with Mukherjee's lifelong interest in brides and their relations with their fathers and their husbands, and she is also one of a long line of Mukherjee daughters and sisters; Mukherjee herself, like Chatterjee, is one of three girls.

Jane Millet has thrown light upon the general issue of the Mukherjee's novels. She has expressed her view in the following way:

Mukherjee's works focus on the phenomenon of migration, the status of new immigrants, and the feeling of alienation often experienced by expatriates as well as on Indian women and their struggle. Her own struggle with identity first as an exile from India, then an Indian

expatriate in Canada, and finally as a immigrant in the United States has lead to her current contentment of being an immigrant in a country of immigrants After moving back to the United States, she wrote about her personal experiences. One of her short stories entitled *Isolated Incidents* explores the biased Canadian view towards immigrants that she encountered, as well as how government agencies handled assaults on particular races. Another short story titled *The Tenant* continues to reflect on her focus on immigrant Indian women and their mistreatment. The story is about a divorced Indian woman studying in the States and her experiences with interracial relationships. (7)

One quotation from the story hints at Mukherjee's views of Indian men as being too preoccupied to truly care for their wives and children, "All Indian men are wife beaters," (432) Maya the narrator] says. She means it and doesn't mean it.

Although all these critics have raised different issues in their analysis and interpretation, none of them have shown how this novel shows emerging India in every aspects. The growing confidence and hegemony of India in the international arena has really made India emerging superpower of the world. Although India is heading towards the path of late capitalist modernization, it has been facing several difficulties and challenges. In the chapter two the researcher aims at discussing about theory at length. In the chapter third the researcher makes the thorough analysis of the text. In the last chapter, the researcher mentions the conclusive facts and findings. With this research design the researcher proceeds ahead in his research work.

II. Cultural Modernity, Globalization and Technology Transfer India

The researcher adopts the tool of globalization and shifting cultural life of India. The researcher dwells upon the idea of changing social life in India. The contributions made by the economic liberalization, globalization, India's entry into the world trade, revolution in information technology will be dealt in an extensively. The researcher examined these elements in the text *Miss New India*. The thriving progress in the information technology in Bangalore has offered sufficient ground for India to be proud of. Internal migration has become a nation wide phenomenon in the present India. Bangalore has created hundreds of thousands of opportunities for youths. So youths from villages migrate from village to cities like Bangalore. Moreover, the assimilation of emerging new values by youths have brought crisis in the traditional and ethical values. Urbanization and industrialization have brought not only graces and advantages but problems also. Along with the rapid economic growth and technology transfer, India has achieved remarkable status in the orbit of international politics. To cover up all these issues the researcher has to use the theoretical ideas about globalization, technological shift, transforming life style, radical progress in information technology and the relation of India with other major powers of the west. Charles Siegel is the leading economic analyst and critic. He has made the following remarks regarding to the growing economic growth of India and the hurdles faced by the new generation:

India ranks second worldwide in farm output. Agriculture and allied sectors like forestry, logging and fishing accounted for 18.6% of the GDP in 2005, employed 60% of the total workforce and despite a steady decline of its share in the GDP, is still the largest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic

development of India. Yields per unit area of all crops have grown since 1950, due to the special emphasis placed on agriculture in the five-year plans and steady improvements in irrigation, technology, application of modern agricultural practices and provision of agricultural credit and subsidies since the green revolution. (39)

India is the largest producer in the world of milk, cashew nuts, coconuts, tea, ginger, turmeric and black pepper. It also has the world's largest cattle population (193 million). It is the second largest producer of wheat, rice, sugar, groundnut and inland fish. It is the third largest producer of tobacco. India accounts for 10% of the world fruit production with first rank in the production of banana and other fruits.

The required level of investment for the development of marketing, storage and cold storage infrastructure is estimated to be huge. The government has implemented various schemes to raise investment in marketing infrastructure. Among these schemes are Construction of Rural Go downs, Market Research and Information Network, and Development / Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization. Main problems in the agricultural sector, as listed by the World Bank, are India's large agricultural subsidies which are hampering productivity-enhancing investment, overregulation of agriculture has increased costs, price risks and uncertainty, government interventions in labor, land, and credit markets, Inadequate infrastructure and services. Roland Spant has made the following disclosure regarding to real achievement made by the shooting economy of India:

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), established in 1905, was responsible for the research leading to the "Indian Green Revolution" of the 1970s. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is the apex body in kundiure and related allied fields, including

research and education The Union Minister of Agriculture is the President of the ICAR. The Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute develops new techniques for the design of agricultural experiments, analyses data in agriculture, and specializes in statistical techniques for animal and plant breeding. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan is known as "Father of the Green Revolution" and heads the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation. He is known for his advocacy of environmentally sustainable agriculture and sustainable food security.

(28)

India is fourteenth in the world in factory output. Manufacturing sector in addition to mining, quarrying, electricity and gas together, account for 27.6% of the GDP and employ 17% of the total workforce. Economic reforms introduced after 1991 brought foreign competition, led to privatization of certain public sector industries, opened up sectors hitherto reserved for the public sector and led to an expansion in the production of fast-moving consumer goods. In recent years, Indian cities have continued to liberalize, but excessive and burdensome business regulations remain a problem in some cities, like Kochi and Kolkata. Post-liberalization, the Indian private sector, which was usually run by oligopolies of old family firms and required political connections to prosper was faced with foreign competition, including the threat of cheaper Chinese imports. It has since handled the change by squeezing costs, revamping management, focusing on designing new products and relying on low labor costs and technology. Louis Wells is of the opinion that India represents the assertiveness of Asia in the global scale. The emergence of two Asian power China and India is capable of demonstrating the fact the model of development is not wholeheartedly Euro-centric. The third world countries can develop their own model

and paradigm of development. The following extract clarifies this point in a dramatic way:

India is quickly overpopulating with growth outstripping China's. The big question is whether the land can sustain such huge pressure. For example in spite of being gifted with abundant resources, huge population is making per-capita income meager. India is home to the largest number of people living under two dollars a day. No one knows if India's economy will be strong enough to rescue such a huge mass of poor people. Poverty also begets child labor. Recently, to tackle this problem, the Indian Government has started a mass employment program to help employ civilians living in rural areas. (131)

However, some note that this will be a spoonful of reform for a sea of misery. India desperately needs to improve its social infrastructure such as roads, rail, power grid, water, communications infrastructure, housing and most importantly education, if it wants to sustain its economic growth.

In this regard India is decades behind in development when compared to U.S., China, etc. India's continual economic prosperity is also hindered by bad government and ubiquitous red tape ('Bureaucratic Raj'). Retrogressive government regulations affect many areas. For example, in some states, black outs and power rationing are common due to underinvestment, differing state and local regulations, etc. This even affects the economic expansion of Bangalore. India has certain limitations and complexities despite the bulk of progress and change it has achieved. Diseases, illiteracy, malnutrition endemic and epidemic fevers have been dragging India's momentum of rapid progress. Asok Sengupta makes the following observation as to the lingering vestiges of regressive forces of tradition:

India's health scenario is dismal. Diseases and malnutrition is widespread amongst the poorest quarter of the populace. Mortality is still relatively high and now the bane of AIDS is spreading fast to improve the situation, a number of projects such as the building of some hospital chains has laid the foundation for a health system that can one day match global standards. However, India desperately needs cheaper and better health care system for its sub-middle class masses. India's complex social past has left some unwanted traces in its present. Casteism discrimination against girl child and occasional sparking of religious intolerance/violence in certain parts of the nation are some dirty stains yet to be totally cleansed from the fabric of Indian society. A huge number of Indian women are yet subjugated and are unable to participate in the economy with their full potential. (27)

Tradition, custom, and rituals have been putting pressures on the constant progressive tempo and transformation of the current India. The pace of progress has not continued to grow in the same rate as expected because the modernist ethos and technological spirit have to resist the insurmountable deadlock from the rigor and onus of tradition:

India has come a long way in the field of democracy. It can teach the lesson of democracy to any country of the world. Its progress in the domain of democracy must be taken as the stepping stone in the direction towards universal democracy.

Atul Kohil opines the following remarking regarding India and democracy:

Democracy has its value more so in a multi-ethnic country like India. However, the applicability of all the theoretical virtues of democracy on a country like India is sometimes questioned. Some thinkers consider India's diverse and messy democracy to levy a huge tax on its

economy. The Indian government has to consider many interest groups before decision making. It is not uncommon to see in India how a few small vested interests can stall the development for many. India's growth is impeded by disputes with its neighboring nuclear power China and Pakistan and disputes with Bangladesh. Because of the disputes, India's neighbors such as China and Pakistan remain distrustful towards India. (52)

It is also occasionally burdened with instability issues within some localized regions/smaller states of the subcontinent. In an effort to reduce political tension and increase economic cooperation, in recent years, India has improved its relations with its neighboring countries.

India heavily depends on foreign oil for its growth - a phenomenon likely to continue until non-fossil/renewable energy technology becomes economically viable for masses. As for now, India is energetically expensive since India has to import over 70% of its energy. Costs of comforts - like personal car or even air conditioning - are extremely high. South Asia like many other regions has to manage various kinds of disasters, but some might become very serious issues in the future

India is a country of heterogeneous ethnic minorities. Several religious sects and sectarianisms have been in existence. Hence there can be the eruption of religious pogrom and antagonism. In *Miss New India* the novelist Mukherjee has depicted the volatile violence-mongering atmosphere of Bangalore. India has a diverse mix of various religions and races. The majority is Hindus by religion, followed by Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, Bahaii and the list goes on. Though most religions in India have been practicing religious tolerance in their histories but the partition and

subsequent terrorism had created some degree of uneasiness among some. Amrita Basu gives utterance to the following statement as the ethnic diversity of India.

The uneducated masses of these various groups sometimes get at odds with one another. However in recent years, relations between the different religious groups have considerably changed for better. For instance, a real chunk, if not the majority, of India's celebrities - sporting legends, film stars, industrialists, artists, politicians, scientists, head-of-state, etc - has come from various non-majority roots, representing the emerging face a new diverse India. The national literacy is yet just 65.2 per cent as per the Census in 2001 above 85% Literacy drive is spreading slowly to other states, and it is hoped that the literacy rate will eventually rise above 70%. At current rates India will take no less than 20 years for a literacy of 95 % (97). Usually, in classical sense, the economic development of a nation follows the sequence of Agricultural age, Industrial & Manufacturing age and finally comes the Services. Some observers see India to be an odd nation out as it seems to have tried to jump to a service dependent economy without adequate industrial base.

It is argued that while services do create great islands of prosperity but for general employment prosperity of the masses a nation does need an adequate manufacturing base. The warning goes that unless India develops mass employment for its masses (possible via manufacturing), it will not be able to generate a broad consumer base to compete with nations who are following the classical growth trajectory and are likely to soon develop their own highly competent service sector. In case India does decide to develop more manufacturing sector, it will have to reckon with nations who have already developed a core competence in this field. There are also counter arguments to this point.

Technological Shift in the Contemporary India

Although an important service provider and having some developed technology skills, India is still far behind powers such as the U.S., Japan or the EU in many fields. India is not a member of the UNSC council, although currently it is one of the four-nation groups actively seeking a permanent seat on the council. Thus India lacks the ability to extend its influence or ideas on international events in the way few chosen nations do.

But in a country of 1.1 billion people, where 800 million earn \$2 a day or less, the Naxal movement shows that members-only progress can spur a deep sense of injustice. Economic growth of 7-8% sounds pretty good until you realize it means just an extra \$40 a year for the average Indian. The changes that will improve the life chances of all — ending malnutrition and corruption, reforming infrastructure, education and health care — will take generations to achieve. History suggests progress will be uneven and messy. During the Industrial Revolution in the British Isles, starvation and forced migration almost halved Ireland's population. In the late 19th century in the U.S., millions lived in squalor, and militias occasionally shot striking workers in labor disputes — it happened as late as 1914, in Ludlow, Colorado. Before the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia had one of the fastest rates of economic growth in Europe, even as peasants starved and an urban proletariat grew up ready to revolt.

It's easy to see how, on a three-day trip, India might feel like a nation magically transformed. Bookstores have shelves dedicated to India's new economic might, newspapers review the latest Porsche, and television advertisements feature Indian astronauts drinking sodas on the moon. But backbreaking poverty remains all too evident, the country still has only 3,000 km of freeway, and finding enough water

to drink is an annual battle for tens of millions. There's a handy Hindu concept to explain these paradoxes. Maya means wonder, as in Mayanagri , the Hindi nickname for Bombay.

India is one of the leading nations in the world in terms of science and technology. India has the second largest pool of scientists and engineers in the world. Anne Krueger throws spotlight upon the technological aspects of India. She propounds her vision and view as follows:

In terms of technological advancements and scientific achievements India is second to none. India belongs to the select group of countries who have developed indigenous nuclear technology. India is among the few countries which have developed ballistic missiles. In the field of space science India is among the few countries which have the capability to launch GSLV satellite. India's achievements in the field of IT and software are acknowledged all over the world. Here are some interesting facts about science and technology in India. (66)

Modern growth economics sheds light on the comparative growth performance of India and China in recent decades. Huge though they are, India and China's economic development strategies and trajectories lend themselves to the same kind of growth analysis as those of other, smaller countries. What works for the rest of the world also works for the two giants of Asia. Herein lies an important lesson.

Technological superstructure has made crucial contribution to the economic growth of India. Bangalore is the IT hub. The traditional production system of India has been transformed completely by the trend of technology transfer. Although India has not invented its own indigenous science and technology, it has assimilated western technology and achieved dramatic progress. Economic policies and

institutions that spur investment, price stability, openness, education, health care, diversification, democracy, and family planning are good for growth because these are ways of building up different kinds of capital that drives economic progress. The main difference between the growth record of India and China is that (a) India has moved less rapidly in the same direction as China on many fronts at once and (b) India has failed to bring population growth down to a desirable level whereas China has failed to introduce democracy. With fewer children, paradoxical though this may sound, India's future prospects look bright because family planning is easy. China has shown the way. Democratization, on the other hand, is a difficult and time-consuming process as the experience of Korea and Taiwan has shown because it requires the defeat of firmly ingrained political opposition against increased democracy. For this reason, China's long-term prospects appear less certain than those of India. China needs democracy at least as much as India needs slower population growth.

The technology and structure of the Indian economy have been changing since Independence. This change in the structure and technology manifests in the form of specific inter-linkages between various sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and services and their sub-sectors. These inter-linkages get reflected through their quantification via national accounts or more specifically, input-output tables. Angus Maddison projects his view as follows:

Technology facilitated an attempt towards measuring technical progress through estimating input coefficients (technical coefficients) across Such a measurement would shed considerable light on the trends in the rate of technical progress as an important source of growth in the Indian economy and lay to rest various speculations about the role of liberalization in promoting technological progress in

the Indian economy. Such an effort would also make it possible to compare the two significant phases of the Indian economy: the 'inward-looking' phase and the 'outward-looking' phase. (98)

The late 1970s is the time in the growth history of India when a major breakthrough occurred in the Indian growth rate which got accelerated by almost 60%. Technical progress in both these cases is supposed to have played a major role though its nature and rate might differ substantially. The early 1990s again represented a major change in the macroeconomic policy environment in the country in terms of accelerated liberalization and globalization. It also led to further acceleration in economic growth in the country, though the extent was much less than in the late 1980s.

Globalization and Its Impact on India

Globalization refers to the increasing global relationships of culture, people, and economic activity. It is generally used to refer to economic globalization: the global distribution of the production of goods and services, through reduction of barriers to international trade such as tariffs, export fees, and import quotas and the reduction of restrictions on the movement of capital and on investment. Globalization may contribute to economic growth in developed and developing countries through increased specialization and the principle of comparative advantage. The term can also refer to the transnational circulation of ideas, languages, and popular culture.

Critics of globalization allege that globalization's benefits have been overstated and its costs underestimated. Critics argue that it has decreased inter-cultural contact while increasing the possibility of international and intra-national conflict. The term was first employed in a publication entitled *Towards New Education* in 1930, to denote a holistic view of human experience in education. The related term 'corporate giants' was coined by Charles Taze Russell in 189 to describe

the largely national trusts and other large enterprises of the time. By the 1960s both terms began to be used synonymously by economists and other social scientists. The term reached the mainstream press in the latter half of the 1980s. Since its inception, the concept of globalization has inspired competing definitions and interpretations, with antecedents dating back to the great movements of trade and empire across Asia and the Indian Ocean from the 15th century onwards.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia define globalization as:

Globalization is widely-used term that can be defined in a number of different ways. When used in an economic context, it refers to the reduction and removal of barriers between national borders in order to facilitate the flow of goods, capital, and services and labor, although considerable barriers remain to the flow of labor. Globalization is not a new phenomenon. It began towards the end of the nineteenth century, but it slowed down during the period from the start of the First World War until the third quarter of the twentieth century. This slowdown can be attributed to the inward-looking policies pursued by a number of countries in order to protect their respective industries, however, the pace of globalization picked up rapidly during the fourth quarter of the twentieth century. (43)

Tom G. Palmer defines globalization is the diminution or elimination of state-enforced restrictions on exchanges across borders and the increasingly integrated and complex global system of production and exchange that has emerged as a result.

Thomas L. Friedman popularized the term "flat world", arguing that globalized trade, outsourcing, supply-chaining, and political forces had permanently changed the

world, for better and worse. He asserted that the pace of globalization was quickening and that its impact on business organization and practice would continue to grow.

Takis Fotopoulos defined "economic globalization" as the opening and deregulation of commodity, capital and labor markets which led to the present neoliberal globalization. "Political globalization" named the emergence of a transnational elite and the phasing out of the nation-state. "Cultural globalization" was the worldwide homogenization of culture. Other elements included "ideological globalization", "technological globalization" and "social globalization".

Indian economy had experienced major policy changes in early 1990s. The new economic reform, popularly known as, *Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization* (LPG model) aimed at making the Indian economy as fastest growing economy and globally competitive. The series of reforms undertaken with respect to industrial sector, trade as well as financial sector aimed at making the economy more efficient. With the onset of reforms to liberalize the Indian economy in July of 1991, a new chapter has dawned for India and her billion plus population. This period of economic transition has had a tremendous impact on the overall economic development of almost all major sectors of the economy, and its effects over the last decade can hardly be overlooked. Besides, it also marks the advent of the real integration of the Indian economy into the global economy.

This era of reforms has also ushered in a remarkable change in the Indian mindset, as it deviates from the traditional values held since Independence in 1947, such as self reliance and socialistic policies of economic development, which mainly due to the inward looking restrictive form of governance, resulted in the isolation, overall backwardness and inefficiency of the economy, amongst a host of other problems. Now that India is in the process of restructuring her economy, with

aspirations of elevating herself from her present desolate position in the world, the need to speed up her economic development is even more imperative. And having witnessed the positive role that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has played in the rapid economic growth of most of the Southeast Asian countries and most notably China, India has embarked on an ambitious plan to emulate the successes of her neighbors to the east and is trying to sell herself as a safe and profitable destination for FDI.

Globalization has many meanings depending on the context and on the person who is talking about. Though the precise definition of globalization is still unavailable a few definitions are worth viewing, Guy Brainbant says that:

The process of globalization not only includes opening up of world trade, development of advanced means of communication, internationalization of financial markets, growing importance of MNCs, population migrations and more generally increased mobility of persons, goods, capital, data and ideas but also infections, diseases and pollution. The term globalization refers to the integration of economies of the world through uninhibited trade and financial flows, as also through mutual exchange of technology and knowledge.

Ideally, it also contains free inter-country movement of labor. (71)

In context to India, this implies opening up the economy to foreign direct investment by providing facilities to foreign companies to invest in different fields of economic activity in India, removing constraints and obstacles to the entry of MNCs in India, allowing Indian companies to enter into foreign collaborations and also encouraging them to set up joint ventures abroad; carrying out massive import liberalization

programs by switching over from quantitative restrictions to tariffs and import duties, therefore globalization has been identified with the policy reforms of 1991 in India.

Indian economy was in deep crisis in July 1991, when foreign currency reserves had plummeted to almost \$1 billion; Inflation had roared to an annual rate of 17 percent; fiscal deficit was very high and had become unsustainable; foreign investors and NRIs had lost confidence in Indian Economy. Capital was flying out of the country and we were close to defaulting on loans. Along with these bottlenecks at home, many unforeseeable changes swept the economies of nations in Western and Eastern Europe, South East Asia, Latin America and elsewhere, around the same time. These were the economic compulsions at home and abroad that called for a complete overhauling of our economic policies and programs. Major measures initiated as a part of the liberalization and globalization strategy in the early nineties included the following: The first step towards globalization was taken with the announcement of the devaluation of Indian currency by 18-19 percent against major currencies in the international foreign exchange market. In fact, this measure was taken in order to resolve the BOP crisis In order to make the process of globalization smooth, privatization and liberalization policies are moving along as well. Under the privatization scheme, most of the public sector undertakings have been/ are being sold to private sector.

Cultural Life in the Present India

According to Amartya Sen, the India born Nobel Laureate in Economics, the culture of modern India is a complex blend of its historical traditions, influences from the effects of colonialism over centuries and current Western culture - both collaterally and dialectically. Sen observes that external images of India in the West often tend to emphasize the difference - real or imagined - between India and the

West. There is a considerable inclination in the Western countries to distance and highlight the differences in Indian culture from the mainstream of Western traditions, rather than discover and show similarities. Western writers and media usually miss, in important ways, crucial aspects of Indian culture and traditions. The deep-seated heterogeneity of Indian traditions, in different parts of India, is neglected in this homogenized description of India. The perceptions of Indian culture, by those who weren't born and raised in India, tend to be one of at least three categories, writes Sen:

Exoticist approach concentrates on the wondrous aspects of the culture of India. The focus of this approach of understanding Indian culture is to present the different, the strange and as Hegel put it, "a country that has existed for millennia in the imaginations of the Europeans."

Magisterial approach assumes a sense of superiority and guardian hood necessary to deal with India, a country that James Mill's imperialist history thought of as grotesquely primitive culture. While great many British observers did not agree with such views of India, and some non-British ones did, it is an approach that contributes to some confusion about the culture of India. Curatorial approach attempts to observe, classify and record the diversity of Indian culture in different parts of India. (243)

The curators do not look only for the strange, are not weighed by political priorities, and tend to be free from stereotypes. The curatorial approach, nevertheless, have an inclination to see Indian culture as more special and extraordinarily interesting than it actually may be. The curatorial approach, one inspired by systematic curiosity for the cultural diversity of India within India, is mostly absent.

There is considerable dispute in India and orientalist scholars on perceived Indian culture. She acknowledges that many dispute claims of pervasiveness of caste and strict social hierarchy in modern India. According to Rosser, an American sociologist, Americans of South Asian origins feel the “Western perception of the culture of India has numerous stereotypes”(53). Rosser notes that the discourse in much of the United States about the culture of India is rarely devoted to independent India. People quickly make sweeping and flawed metaphysical assumptions about its religion and culture, but are far more circumspect when evaluating civil society and political culture in modern India. It is as if the value of South Asia resides only in its ancient contributions to human knowledge whereas its pathetic attempts to modernize or develop are to be winked at and patronized. Rosser conducted numerous interviews and summarized the comments. The study reports a stark contrast between Western perceptions of the culture of India, versus the direct experience of the interviewed people. The presentation of South Asians is a standard pedagogic approach which runs quickly from the Cradle of Civilization—contrasting the Indus Valley with Egypt and Mesopotamia—on past the Aryans, who were somehow our ancestors— to the poverty stricken, superstitious, polytheistic, caste ridden Hindu way of life, and then somehow magically culminates with a eulogy of Mahatma Gandhi. A typical textbook trope presents the standard Ancient India Meets the Age of Expansion Approach with a color photo of the Taj Mahal. There may be a side bar on ahimsa or a chart of connecting circles graphically explaining samsara and reincarnation, or illustrations of the four stages of life or the Four Noble Truths. Amid the dearth of real information there may be found an entire page dedicated to a deity such as Indra or Varuna, who admittedly are rather obscure vis-à-vis the beliefs of most modern Hindus."

India's family structure, and cultural traditions within its family structure, has been a subject of numerous studies. In India's history, and currently in certain regions, a joint family plays a significant role in the Indian culture. For generations, India has had a prevailing tradition of the joint family system. It is a system under which extended members of a family – parents, children, the children's spouses and their offspring, etc. – live together. Usually, the oldest male member is the head in the joint Indian family system. He makes all important decisions and rules, and other family members abide by them.

In a 1966 study, Orenstein and Micklin analyzed India's population data and family structure. According to him “their studies suggest that Indian household sizes had remained similar over 1911 to 1951 period. Thereafter, with urbanization and economic development, India has witnessed a break up of traditional joint family into more nuclear-like families”(86). Mahendra Sinha notes that over the last 60 years, the cultural trend in most parts of India has been an accelerated change from joint family to nuclear families, much like population trends in other parts of the world. The traditional large joint family in India, in the 1990s, accounted for a small percent of Indian households, and on average had lower per capita household income. He finds that joint family still persists in some areas and in certain conditions, in part due to cultural traditions and in part due to practical factors.

Arranged marriages have been the tradition in Indian society though men and women have always had the choice of who they want to marry. Even today, the majority of Indians have their marriages planned by their parents and other respected family-members, with the consent of the bride and groom. In most marriages the bride's family provides a dowry to the bride to safe guard herself and her children in the event of her husband passing prematurely. Since 1956, Indian laws treat males and

females as equal in matters of inheritance without a legal will. Indians are increasingly using a legal will for inheritance and property succession, with about 20 percent using a legal will by 2004.

In India, the divorce rate is low —“ 1% compared with about 40% in the United States. These statistics do not reflect a complete picture, though. There is a dearth of scientific surveys or studies on Indian marriages, where the perspectives of both husbands and wives were solicited in-depth”(165) according Lean Bennet. Sample surveys suggest the issues with marriages in India are similar to trends observed elsewhere in the world. The divorce rates are rising in India. Urban divorce rates are much higher. Women initiate about 80 percent of divorces in India. Opinion is divided over what the phenomenon means: for traditionalists the rising numbers portend the breakdown of society while, for some modernists, they speak of a healthy new empowerment for women.

By using these ideas about the shifting anthropological and cultural life of Indians the researcher shows how new India has embraced progressive western ideas and technology. By the same token the present researcher applies these ideas about privatization, economic liberalization and globalization in order to analyze the text. The triumphant emergence of India as the superpower and its modernist as well as conventional features are to be explored in the text, *Miss New India*. The present researcher moves ahead in the third portion of the thesis with the help of these theoretical ideas.

III. Emergence of Modern India

Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* represents how new contemporary India emerged as the triumphant and promising country capable of raising strong and authoritarian voice in the global politics. In the field of Information Technology India has made a dramatic progress. Bangalore is the hub of information technology. The contemporary India has achieved vast break-through in the area of technocratization. Instead of inventing original technology and paradigm of progress, India has assimilated and imported western technology. The importation of western technology has enhanced the productive potentiality of India. The importation of west's advanced science and technology has dramatically transformed the entire traditional face of India. Bangalore is the topmost IT hub of Asia. The orientation and projection of Bangalore in the orbit of IT has opened the vast economic opportunities. It has offered the hundreds of thousands of jobs to the modern educated youths. Tempted by this kind of economic opportunity, several youths from different villages come from to Bangalore. The old and traditional values have failed to address the basic problems of the contemporary youths. They are fascinated to the modern life style offered by the grace of technology.

Interesting story of the emerging women of India ,although not very likeable, Anjali Bose is the author's view of the new *Miss India*. Angie has been brought up to expect a successful arranged marriage, despite her sister's disastrous example. Growing up in a small town, she nevertheless catches the interest of an expat teacher who sees potential in her. From the description, the researcher just see a spoiled brat who expects Prince Charming, selected by her father, to sweep her off her feet to riches and glory. When her expectations are dashed, she runs away to Bangalore, with letters of recommendation and opportunities galore. She is awash in self pity which

the researcher found extremely annoying, and she is dishonest with herself and even those who try to help her. This may be the face of the emerging Miss India, but it is certainly not a pleasant or complimentary depiction of a new generation. Eager to lie on the phone to Americans, and lie to each other about who they are, the characters have little integrity and are mostly examples of greed, self pity and dishonesty.

Along with the prospect of finding out jobs in IT centers, youths are fascinated towards the glamorous and splendid life. For them Bangalore represents the splendor of modernity and magnificence of technological innovation. Because of the expanding influence and splendor of Bangalore, mass internal migration has taken place. Many people have started turning their back towards the rigorous tradition. Cultural antiquity and social sanctity of village have become loose and they no longer unify people together. The flourishing social and technological modernity has charmed emerging youths. Daughters in villages are unwilling to marry the man their parents have chosen for them. For those daughters, marriage and domestic settlement are of less important than the prospect of shaping the career and social diversification.

There is a Bose family in Gauripur. Anjali Bose is a young girl of adulthood. She has been receiving English language training. She is on the point of completing her graduation. She has been taking English language training from the English language instructor Peter Champion. Before Peter Champion came to live in Gauripur, one of the villages in northern Calcutta, he had lived in Bangalore. He had had the experience of observing lives in Bangalore. He has had the pragmatic and practical knowledge of assimilating the metropolitan diversity and charm of Bangalore. As he knew Anjali Bose's desire to orient herself toward the modern life, he freely implanted in her mind the love for free life, individuality and autonomy. The face of new India in general and the industrialized landscape of Bangalore tantalize

her. The following extract cited from the text illuminates the beauty and splendor of Bangalore:

Bangalore had seemed the answer to all her fears and all her anger. Bangalore was a great game, a way of profitably using her English, avenging Sonali, and becoming independent, while picking and choosing among thousands of boys with good English and the same ambition. The Bangalore commitment meant packing a bag and sneaking out and admitting she was not desirable enough to overcome the stigma of coming from nowhere, and her parents' poverty. Her parents could live with another failed marriage. They could tolerate her misery so long as they felt they had done their duty. But they would not survive the shame of a second daughter's act of defiance and insubordination. (45)

Anjali is constantly impressed by the metropolitan glamour. Peter Champion implants in her a sense of longing for the free modernist life in Bangalore. Before taking this kind of situation Anjali Bose happens to speculate about the probable consequence of her choices. At times, she was thwarted from individual choice due to the probable consequence of her strong move towards the world of freedom.

Having been seduced by her groom Subodh Mitra, Anjali Bose takes a bold decision to march into Bangalore. For her Bangalore represents a large world where she can freely cultivate and contemplate about what she can become freely and independently. She is well-aware that her parents and the local community in Gauripur will fiercely oppose her inclination to immerse in the metropolitan world of Bangalore. When she falls victims to the sexual molestation of Subodh Mitra, she comes to how narrow and conservative Gauripur community is. She goes to get

sympathy and consolation from her elder sister, Sonali, she feels puzzled and irritated. Her sister Sonali tells her to tolerate Subodh Mitra's brutal sexual lust. Having seen this sort of pathetic remark of Sonali, Anjali feels profoundly shocked. At that very moment it was Subodh Mitra's counseling that proved to be far more fruitful in making the life of Anjali Bose comfortable. Anjali has had the instinctive and innate inclination to live in the world of freedom and individuality. She feels suffocated and smothered in the parochial and conservative village in Gauripur. Having offered farewell to Gauripur, she makes a dash to Bangalore. Hyderabad, the heart of Bangalore produces first and flowery impression in her. The following extract illustrates how precious Hyderabad is and how it represents the timeless beauty of emerging India:

It was noon in Hyderabad , a legendary city she never thought she would visit. At least, she had been dropped at its bus depot early in the morning and been able to sit on a bench for two hours and sip hot tea before heading to the line for the last bus, the final leg. Bengaluru? Bengaluru? she kept asking , having learned Bangalore 's southern name , though she could not read the southern script. By following vague hand gestures and leaving her perch two hours before the scheduled departure, she managed to stand near the head of the line. At boarding time, however, passengers lugging heavy burlap sacks and taped -together cardboard boxes had rushed from behind and shoved her aside. But nonetheless she was now on the bus to Bangalore. Five hundred and sixty more kilometers to go. Two thousand kilometers behind her. Assuming no breakdowns, there had to be another hot day and a cold all-nighter on the bus. Bangalore by morning. (74)

To Anjali Bose , Bangalore seems to be awesome and stupendous. She has found emancipation in her immersion in the challenging world of freedom. She does not have any close relatives in Bangalore. Nor does she have friends. She just have a few friends of her teacher in Bangalore. With a hope to survive and flourish in the complicated world of Bangalore, she has demonstrated considerable sort of audacity. The show of audacity and effrontery on the part of Anjali Bose is highly laudable.

Peter Champion had put in her mind that Bangalore is the fountain of vast and limitless economic prosperity . It can set plenty of economic opportunities to those who have come there from village in search of better comfort and progress. The migrants from village have the renewed sense of boosting their economic strength by selling their talents. Those who are curious to live modernist lives need secure economic stability and the concrete level of financial betterment. Anjali has had the motive of uplifting her financial condition. She is bent upon lifting her living condition by doing a decent job. The following extract dramatizes the immense potentiality which Bangalore inherently possesses:

This must be Bangalore. Six millions , seven millions, Peter had said , sixty, seventy lakhs , how could she imagine such numbers? But the bus would merely stop under a streetlamp to let off or take on a passenger or two, then ease back into the black of the night. She could not read the strange scripts of southern languages and they seemed impossible to speak, all thudding consonants linked with breathless spurts. She , so proud of her Hindi and English and even, if pushed , her Bangla had been struck deaf and dumb. (77)

Anjali Bose is amazed at the linguistic variations and diversity. She is confident in her capacity to face the new challenges in the wake of heterogeneous relationships in the new world dominated completely in the emerging trends and tendencies.

Anjali finally arrives in Bangalore. Luckily, she happens to meet a Gujarati man named Girish Gujaral. He guides her to the residence of Minnie Bagehot. She is amazed at the unconditional help offered by Mr. G. G. He is simply interested in informing her how volatile, complicated and prosperous Bangalore. From the mouth of Mr. G.G. she happens to hear many stories about Bangalore, its progress, changing lives of people and ultimately the immense economic potentiality. From her acquaintance with him, she comes to know many things about the current influence Bangalore had exerted in the economy of India and the prestigious position of Bangalore as the IT hub of Asia. The following lines taken out from the text show how Anjali is gradually mesmerized by the technological splendor and magnificence of Bangalore:

With a mock salute , he strode back to the Daewoo. Angie tried to reconcile Peter Champion's Mrs Bagehot with Mr GG's Mad Minnie. She was glad, she decided , that she had private phone number. No shame in accepting help from people willing , even eager, to assist her. A job is the key to happiness, she calculated. A job brings respect and power. Money brings transformation. Stagnation creates doubt and tyranny. Money transforms a girl from Gauripur into a woman from Bangalore.(108)

Anjali is optimistic that her individual life will be transformed by emerging trends and lifestyles. She is fascinated by the prospect of getting job having a lucrative income. She is of the opinion that her entry into in the world of Bangalore will herald a big

transformation in her life. After coming in Bangalore Anjali comes to know what she was in Gauripur and what she is in Bangalore. The real face of the contemporary India is revealed to her. To her Gauripur represented the old India and Bangalore represents what it has become and what it is capable of becoming in times to come.

When she knows that Bangalore is the IT hub of Asia, she decides to project herself in the complicated world of Bangalore. She visits Minnie Bagehot's residence. Her teacher in Gauripur was on close terms with Minnie Bagehot. So Anjali is accepted by Minnie in her residence without a moment's hesitation. The order, system, symmetry and regularized form of urban lives tempted her. She is confident enough to hope that Bangalore will impose order and discipline in her life so that she can accomplish what she is capable of achieving. The splendor of Bagehot's guesthouse and cleanliness of the city are twin things which come recurrently in her mind. The following extract highlights how India has been projecting itself in global arena:

Everyone knew that India needed the bracing authority and esprit de corps of a military dictatorship, with some democracy around the edges. And progress. And Bangalore? Well, Bangalore was a splendid place, so long as the natives kept their filthy hands off. Bangalore's weather, a year round seventy-five degrees, with no bloody monsoon and no mosquitoes, was an empire in the expansive sense of the word still existed. (120)

In the beginning of her journey into Bangalore she got the positive impressions of Bangalore. With a passage of time she grows awake to the negative side of this big city. The glamorous side of life in Bangalore has been appealing to her. Once she

finds herself confined in the unavoidably crushing pressures of life in Bangalore, the charm of Bangalore fades away gradually.

The greatness and vastness of Bangalore has compelled her to compare city life and life in Gauripur. Mentally, she compares Bangalore with Gauripur. This comparison between Bangalore and Gauripur is raised by Bharati Mukherjee to the higher level of the comparison between the old India and the emerging new India. When she compares Bangalore with Gauripur, she finds Gauripur lagging behind. For being born in Gauripur she feels a pang of regret. For quitting Gauripur and coming to Bangalore she feels very much proud. Her radical choice turns out to be pragmatic and far-reaching. In the following paragraph Anjali Bose's speculation on her own choice in the face of Bangalore riddle:

Peter did not pull punches: historically, Indian society was not structured around networking and contacts, but rather around family and community. In backward places like Bihar allegiance to family and hometown and religion and language group and even caste counts more than competence. Peter's lesson of a year and a half ago became a fresh revelation. He could have been talking about Baba. Even in Bihar, Baba's only friends were Bihar-born Bengalis. Everyone else was deemed slightly, or grossly, untrustworthy. Baba could not escape the community that he and the three generations of Gauripur-born Boses had known. But with his two daughters even in Bihar, he had failed. (124)

Anjali comes to know that traditional life in Gauripur had been prone to casteism, religious bigotry and cultural parochialism. In Bangalore she finds that life in Bangalore is above all those limitations like casteism, tradition, religious extremism,

rigid convention and gender discrimination. In the new modernist India, all such socio-cultural and religious constraints are stopped hindering lives. New India is marked by new values and viewpoints, new outlook and spirit.

Religious differences and the constraints of culture have faded gradually in new India. In the residence of Minnie Bagehot, Anjali has to share rooms with Muslim girls. The religious distance and cultural parochialism and traditional gender role are no longer practiced in Bangalore. The sentence "Now she was sharing a bathroom with a Muslim and a Christian.(124)". Other friends of Anjali in Bagehot residence tell her to keep boyfriends at the same time. They give her this advice "At their first lunch, Tookie had advised Anjie to keep two boyfriends: one for the workplace, offering convenient rides and innocent companionship"(124). A vast change is scheduled in Anjali's life. If any change comes in her life, it would be the contribution of Bangalore and her willingness to assimilate and internalize the emerging values.

With the passage of time she becomes aware of darkness, surveillance and control city life exerted on her. In the residence of Minnie Bagehot, Anjali Bose had to live under surveillance. Minnie Bagehot was strict in forcing her tenants to maintain the decorum. There were other friends of Anjali. They had lived better and standard lives. In comparison to them, her life is far more backward and impoverished. Hoping that the new world in Bangalore will give freedom and comfortable life, she had come to Bangalore. But she becomes increasingly aware of the new burden which urban life set for migrants who come to Bangalore in search of better opportunity.

Bangalore represents the contemporary India which is heavily modernized. It is technologically well-equipped. The phenomenon of technology has helped India a

lot in creating separate technological superstructure. Bangalore is the symbol of modernized India in the current time. The following extract elucidates the core point as to how new is the contemporary India:

I look at modern Bangalore, and at Delhi and Mumbai, and I wonder what are we creating? Not in our private sector, but in the public? Can we keep that old patience -dignity, as our hostess calls it - and the passion? Have we lost our sense of civic morality forever? The newfound prosperity in this city is breathtaking, and I don't mean to disparage it. Prosperity is a good thing. But I am not sure of the wealth that comes from outsourcing. I wish the prosperity was rooted to something. I wish it built something beyond glass monuments. It seems as flimsy as a kite or a balloon. What comes drifting in with the winds might just as easily drift away. (159)

Prosperity that has been created in modern India. But prosperity should be distributed equally to other people. If prosperity and profit are not allocated equivalently to the people, it would be the grave social injustice. If prosperity is centralized in the metropolitan area only, people living in the rustic area will be deprived of the growing prosperity. Outsourcing is bad for the continuous development. If prosperity happens in the same pace, it can develop further troubles.

Globalization, cultural modernity, technology transformation, privatization, economic liberalization, revolution in information technology and the invention of alternative modernity and rapid innovation have made constructive entry into the world of Bangalore. What Bangalore is nowadays is the effect of all these global flows and fruitfulness. The following extract discloses the dramatic technocratization of Bangalore which is the microcosm of the contemporary India:

They were the experts, with their professional degrees and their years of experience with comparative business models and communications systems, but they just did not get it: to a Gauripur runaway like her, Bangalore was not about global economics. It was an emotional and moral tsunami; it washed away old beliefs and traditions, the comforting ones together with the crippling, and if you survived, you knew you had the spunk and the grit to rebuild. Excuse me, Madam, Anjali interjected, and she suddenly found herself standing, the focus of everyone's attention. (162)

Technical expertise and innovative know-how played primary part in changing the appearance of Bangalore. It has established itself as the topmost emporium and IT hub. The power of Bangalore represents the world of eternal charm. This is where modernization can be experienced. The unique glow and glamour of Bangalore could not help making Anjali Bose remember her village Gauripur. Unknowingly and knowingly she is tempted to compare Gauripur with Bangalore. To find out how detached she has come from her core self it is necessary for her to compare. By comparing the smallness with the hugeness of Bangalore, she has come to impose a kind of certainty on the growing fear and frantic mood.

Ever since she started dwelling upon Bangalore she had to encounter plenty of things about her daily life. The money she had started running out and she was on the rush to get the job. But the standard of her oral English failed to meet the requirements of her being the agent in call centers. That is why she is found lost in the brooding mood of tension. The following extract highlights this aspect of Anjali's growing helplessness and uncertainty in the face of Bangalore's vastness. The

following citation shows how much restrictions Bangalore can exert in the life of a helpless individual:

When the comb broke in two in her hands, she moved away from the window. From the magic closet, she selected a slinky pink salwar - kamez set and tried it on . She had not looked so good in months- may be never. Looking great was the shortest cut to feeling great. Add a pair of purple, high-heeled slingbacks and a Chanel purse. Arrogance bled into self-confidence. She was starting her life over. She was starting in the bollywood version of her breakout from Gauripur. Bangalore! Bangalore! A chorus of sweaty, spangled dancers circled her. Today is the day! Today is the day! They sang and shimmied. She felt male dancers lift her from the dreary world of Sunita Sampath. She floated free, the spirit of Mr GG's Bangalore. Mr GG , the love interest played by Shah Rukh Khan, awaited her in the next scene. She flashed on Ali swaying to a bollywood soundtrack in Peter Champion's flat.

(200)

A new awakening in life happened in the character of Anjali Bose and her friends who live in the residence of Minnie Bagehot. The preponderance of poverty and immaturity in Gauripur haunted Anjali's initiation into the world of Bangalore. To cut the matter short , it can be ascertained that Bangalore embodies what India is capable of becoming and what it has become. For the traditionalists the success of Bangalore is envious to those who come to work from different villages.

In the modern India there is the preponderance and abundance of plenty of opportunities. Prosperity is in store for those who come to Bangalore. If poverty is the

hallmark of the old India, Prosperity has become its identifying attribute. Thus the researcher quotes the following remarks:

The country was being overrun with repatriates and immigrants. India had become the land of milk and honey for everyone except young people born and raised in Gauripur. It was not fair. Moni Lahiri had seduced her with fantasy games of wine and sand , only to betray her.

(214)

The prosperity generated by executives and entrepreneurs in Bangalore remained out of the reach of those excluded and marginalized who are confined in traditional villages. In new India there is the problem of the centralization of power , pelf and prosperity. The rapid modernization also may not address the actual problems of poverty illiteracy.

Anjali Bose, the most luminous star of her business school, has a choice to make about her future: remain in her backwater Indian town and succumb to a stultifying arranged marriage or, at her professor's urging, muster the nerve to move to dizzying, boom-time Bangalore. When an outing with a marriage applicant goes brutally wrong, she takes off for the city and a life of improvisation and risk. It's here, amid the glinting wonders of modern India, that this spirited tale of transformation really begins. Anjali walks wide eyed through a city where the streets are lined with swank boutiques, where women can associate with men who aren't their relatives and where, for the financially anointed, apartments come with indoor swimming pools and maid service.

Readers can be anyone you want here, Anjali marvels as she falls in with the call-center crowd, the "Suzies" and "Brads" who've sharpened their English on Seinfeld and who make more money in a month than her father did in a year. But

Anjali's sudden, euphoric rise to "it" girl is tempered by the sometimes sinister motives of her fellow strivers and by her own crime (as she perceives it) of "constant, heedless wanting." As a tidal wave of riches comes crashing down around her, Anjali must rethink who she truly wants to be. In nuanced prose, Mukherjee vividly demonstrates what we all come to know but can easily forget: that even in a thriving consumer culture, transformation by money alone isn't transformation at all.

In the new India as represented by Bangalore there was inherent vulnerability. Innocent persons can easily fall victims to threat, urban criminality and terrorism. One of the friend of Anjali had been involved covertly in the terrorist organization. She played primary part in making the bombardment of Heathrow airport. Later on Anjali was convicted with having an alliance with the so-called sympathizers of terrorist. Anjali was taken to the custody. She was harassed and interrogated beyond the criteria of normal expectation. In this way Miss New India represents several pros and cons of rapid entry of India into the world of universal modernization and technocratization.

IV. Conclusion

Bharti Mukherjee's *Miss New India* is the parable of Modern India. Different dimensions of India have been described in this novel. Bangalore has been represented as though it represents the modern India. In modern India several reformations have come in the socio-economic and cultural lives of people dwelling in the urban areas. Bangalore has been used as the microcosm which represents the macrocosm of India. Elsewhere in the world the fervor of modernism has pervaded. Even in the backward community of Gauripur, the fervor of modernism has reached the new level of public reception. The core cultural values and viewpoints are under assault. Youths like Anjali Bose are tempted to taste the forbidden fruit of modern life which accommodates individual lives and freedom. Youths are encouraged to diversify the narrow limitations of traditional experience. The growing urbanization has created the huge problem of internal migrations. Bangalore is capable of offering opportunities to those who come to Bangalore. The waves of globalization, economic liberalization, privatization, India's entry into world trade, and revolution in information technology have gradually transformed India. The impact of all these event and happening can be clearly seen in Bangalore. Countless call centers have been established. Youths having eloquent English get jobs in the call centers. That is why many girls with a sound oral English come to Bangalore and seeks jobs. In this novel *Miss New India*, Anjali Bose happens to quit Gauripur so that her dream to taste the experience in Bangalore can be materialized.

Bangalore has become the IT hub. The impact of IT can be seen in the complicated lives in Bangalore. Technology transfer has been the key in India's shift from the old phase to the new phase of modernist emergence. Mukherjee depicts India as the emerging superpower. India has conducted nuclear test and presented itself as

the emerging superpower. This sort of triumphant emergence of India as the leading superpower has raised the position and prestige of India. Moreover, an India lady had won the crown of miss world. Girls and boys are fed up with the traditional trend of arranged marriage. They are tempted towards love marriage, premarital sex, extramarital and other forms of modernist glamour. The per-capital income of workers working in the mega cities has crossed ten thousand dollars. Economic boom and financial exuberance have made Indian economy confident. Prosperity, growing per-capital income, freedom and assimilation of western lifestyles are some of the characteristics of new India.

Although emerging new India has positive signs of prosperity, it has other darker sides also. Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* not only reveals the bright sides but the dark sides also. In the metropolitan urban sides, relatively greater degree of prosperity lies. But in the village poverty still lies. Even in the newly urbanized area there are several problematic. The growing urban criminality has become the nuisance and headache. Juvenile delinquency is another obstacle. The helplessness of those youths who have come to Bangalore for jobs and their victimization by the growing hierarchy amidst different groups dominate the entire prospects of the narrative. Worst of all, terrorism has become the greatest hurdles. The new India has to face threat of terror. In the novel *Miss New India*, the innocent Anjali Bose had to fall victims to police brutality and callous insensitivity.

In the eyes of their city, all Annawadians are criminals, squatters on airport property, so they cannot open businesses. Most are trash sorters, selling metals and plastic they gather from random sources or buy from children who risk their lives nightly to pluck bits of the recyclables from a roadway. Some of the garbage, however, is obtained by trespassing on hotel grounds, or is stolen from construction

sites. Whenever a family purchases a television set, improves its property, or sends a child to school, a policeman's first suspicion is that the money must have come from some sort of illegality. The only way to avoid jail is to pay off the police, who share their take with judges and lawyers. It is a sordid game, its rules understood and played by all.

Of the slum's 3,000 inhabitants, only six have full-time jobs, yet by government standards Annawadi does not fall below the poverty level. Most of the men and boys, including Abdul, his tubercular father, and Fatima's TB-ridden husband, are model entrepreneurs, recyclers with an eye to the burgeoning Chinese metals market on the eve of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. It has been a memorable year for Indian trash sorters such as Abdul, leading, in his case, to new tiles on the floor and the in installation of the fatal cooking shelf. His father is too sick to work much, so Abdul is singlehandedly supporting his family on the equivalent of about \$11 a day.

In *Miss New India* we meet Anjali Bose, a young girl born into a lower class family in the small town of Gauripur, India whose family's only goal is to get her married "well". Anjali, however, has other aspirations - thanks to an education and a teacher who believes in her, Anjali dreams of a new, independent life in Bangalore where she can work at a call center. Anjali is conflicted about leaving her home and family until a terrible encounter with the man her family has selected for her seals the deal and sends her packing to Bangalore. Once in Bangalore, Anjali meets a collection of women who have all come to the city to reinvent themselves and find success in a call center. They are jaded about the role they play in society as essentially commodities in the service of Western companies and the Indian businessmen and women who have bought into this new economy for their country.

While in Bangalore, Anjali finds herself in a number of dangerous situations and continues to be unsure about the decision she made to leave home but, with a lot of help from generous benefactors, Anjali persists in finding a new life in Bangalore.

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