

Chapter I: Cultural Hybridity, and Adjustment Problem in *The Tree****Bride*****(a) Backgrounding the Research Work:**

This research aims to trace the cultural hybridity in Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tree Bride*. The text is a story of Tara Chatterjee, the protagonist as well as the narrator of the novel who in search of her cultural and ancestral identity comes back in her ancient heritage Mishtigunj after her divorce in America. She had been living in America where she used to teach in a college.

The story begins from her San Francisco house and trails back to her legendary great-great-aunt and namesake, Tara Lata, who was born in 1874 and, at five, married to a tree because her fiancé died. Tara Lata herself is the iconic figure of cultural and ritual identity of Hindu and political legend who bravely conspired to win Bengal's independence from England. As the narrator gradually discovers why her namesake died in prison, she uncovers much evidence of the British rulers' contempt for the India as well as Mishtigunj. She finds that Mishtigunj or entire India itself a contact zone of various cultures during colonial period. The place was shared with Bengali Brahmins, Muslims and British invaders. Her family members too were influenced by British educational and administrative system and their materialistic life style. Furthermore, they have a glory of Hindu religion, myths, rituals and spiritualism. In this regard, the ancestral history of protagonist Tara Chatterjee is too shaped by the cultural hybridity as revealed in the text.

The Tree Bride reveals the story of cultural in-betweenness in different levels. It, on one hand presents the impact and influence of British culture upon the Indian or the protagonist's cultural heritage. On the other hand, the protagonist herself is living in between of two cultures. She is living life in America accepting the western way of

life and at the same time she is highlighting the Indian culture, myths and heritage as her true identity that makes her obliged to turn back to Mishtigunj. Bharati Mukherjee herself being a Diaspora author rises the issue of cultural hybridity in *The Tree Bride*.

Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tree Bride* is a story of Tara Chatterjee, the protagonist as well as the narrator of the novel. In particular, this work of dissertation tries to depict that by bringing the protagonist Tara Chatterjee who is shaped according to ancient Indian myths, customs, traditions and highly influenced by the role of myths and legends on the formation of cultural identity and heritage of the people from the third world people; but unfortunately she as the resident of America is obliged to adopt the western norms and cultural values. Her divorce with her husband and her forehead without sindoor are the example of the impact of westernization in her life. Though she is highly impressed by eastern marriage values, the smooth relationship with couples when marriage is designed in heaven she is unable to apply in her own life. In this regard, she is in the position of cultural in-between. She is neither pure Indian nor American. Her position is what the Diaspora people bears and the subject matter of the text is what the Diaspora author chooses.

Bharati Murkherjee tries to depict the resistance against the cultural imperialism of the west through the cultural awareness of self. Tara Chatterjee a women living on San Francisco is from the Bengali heritage, which is shaped according to ancient Indian myths, customs, and traditions and highly influenced by the role of myths and legends the woman in Indian society as well as believes upon the marriage system and smooth relationship between couple in Indian society. Furthermore, she is highly inspired by freedom fighter Tara Lata who had married with a tree after the death of her child bridegroom at the age of five.

The politic of picking the story from San Francisco to Bengal by focusing and valorizing the Indian rituals and tradition is Mukherjee's cultural awareness as well as a challenge against the cultural imperialism of west.

(b) Narrativization of Native Past, Culture and Legend

The text begins as Tara Charerjee's San Francisco house is firebombed by a man obsessed with killing her, and trails back to her legendary great-great-aunt and namesake, Tara Lata, who was born in 1874 and, at five, married to a tree because her fiancé died. Mukherjee reveals later that Tara Lata bravely conspired to win Bengal's independence from England. As the narrator gradually discovers why her namesake died in prison, she uncovers much evidence of the British rulers' contempt for the Indians they claimed that they were 'civilizing,' their cruelty, bigotry and duplicity cut into the narrative. Thus the text reveals the story of colonial resistance by Bangladeshi people in one hand; through the legend of Tara Lata it reveals the ancient place Mishtigung evoking the Hindu culture, rituals and spirituality of contemporary time and space. Furthermore, the text includes these cultural rituals, artifacts, and identity to challenges the colonial mentality of cultural imperialism by valorizing the eastern legends and culture upon western.

From the same cultural awareness, Tara Chatterjee gets the resolution from her ups and down relationship with her husband because of her name sake Tara Lata's wedding resonates in miraculous interactions over the generations which are haunting the people from Indian civilization as a medium of glorification. In this regard Mukherjee writes,

Marriage had not been part of the same hierarchy of obligation.

Marriage was something done once and for all time to satisfy

everyone's expectations, then put aside. Marriage was self- sustaining,

the way our grandparents' had been. But those are the Indian assumptions, not American. (17- 18)

Here, Mukherjee not only refers the definition of marriage of Hindu community but also regards as a rich cultural rituals, which bears no hierarchy between male and female. The ritualistic marriage of Hindu community has no chance of divorce and separation unlike in western society. Thus, Mukherjee has resisted against the western cultural imperialism by emphasizing the eastern rituals and cultures. Mukherjee further asserts, "Marriage is bigger than the participants" (32) in Hindu community valorizing self cultural artifacts as opposition of western norms and value. Here, her position seems as if she has not lost her eastern cultural identity.

She seems as if she is resisting the western cultural imperialism. "But those are Indian assumplings, not American" (18) refers that her Indian assumptions no more could justice her position; rather she is obliged to follow the western/ American values about marriage. The references clarify that the position of the protagonist is shaped by her cultural hybridity or Diaspora.

The Tree Bride in one hand portrays the Indian blooded female as its protagonist. She is highly inspired religious values, marries values as well female cultures, mentality and values of Hindu community. Furthermore, she believes on the legend Tara Lata who had married to a tree as her husband because her child fiancé had died at the age of five. Later she had involved in freedom fight against British imperialism. About Tara Lata's contribution on independence movement, Mukherjee writes:

Freed of any family obligation, she spent the next sixty years inside her father's compound, learning to read and write Bengali and English, then teaching and finally organizing and protesting. Every manner of

protester and activist came to visit: Mahatma Gandhi the pacifist and Netaji Subhas Bose the militant, American friends of India, Sikh sepecialists from California, vegetarians and theosophists, Sufis and freethinkers, authors and photographers. (33)

Though being a child widow; Tara Lata is able to transform her power to revolt against British colonization involving herself in the independence movement. In this regard, Tara Chatterjee is highly inspired by her name sake Tara Lata. It clarifies her consciousness of cultural identity. But the same cultural awareness leads her to the nostalgia and an adjustment problem for Tara Chatterjee. This never makes her a true Indian or American.

The Tree Bride in one hand portrays the Indian blooded female as its protagonist living in America following the western way of life style. On the other hand, she is highly inspired by the eastern religious and marries values of Hindu community. Furthermore, she believes on the legend Tara Lata who had married to a tree as her husband because her child fiancé had died at the age of five. Later she had involved in freedom fight against British imperialism. Does this dual position of cultural identity give the protagonist a fixed cultural identity? Could she be a true Indian or a complete American? No, she cannot become a true Indian or an American. The cultural in-betweenness gives her adjustment problem.

Does even the cultural heritage of the protagonist Tara Chatterjee is untouched with the impact of cultural hybridity due to the British cultural imperialism? No, even her cultural heritage Mishtigunj undergoes through the fusion of different cultures being the contact zone of colonizer and colonized during colonization.

Bharati Mukherjee takes the protagonist Tara Chatterjee who is neither completely Indian nor completely American. She is influenced by ancient Indian

myths, customs, traditions and marriage values even though she is unable to follow her tradition being a Diaspora people and is obliged to follow the western norms and values like divorce and single life. Furthermore, she presents her ancient heritage Mishtigunj as a contact zone of various cultures from British to Bengali depicts the cultural hybridity and adjustment problem in *The Tree Bride*. Protagonist's past is her Indian identity and her present is American. She lives neither in past nor in present. In this regard, Mukherjee writes, "I believe it was Faulkner who said the past isn't past. The past isn't even dead" (29).

Influence of own myths, rituals and legend upon Tara Chatterjee is analyzed through the perspective post colonial cultural awareness. Tara Chatterjee's iconic legend Tara Lata not only follows the Indian rituals by marrying with tree at the age of five while her child fiancé died but also involves in freedom fight movement against British imperialism. Through this point this research will trace the significance of identity formation of Diaspora people in literature written by the author living abroad as a Diaspora writer as well as their position of cultural in-betweenness and problem of adjustment.

The story of Tara Lata (the Tree Bride) unfolds her mystery and history of her ancient heritage Mishtigunj as well as another legend John Mist, the place is named after his name. Protagonist's ancestral heritage too is not untouched by the cultural hybridity. During the British colonization it was the contact zone of English and Indian cultures. The naming of her place itself is the result of cultural hybridity.

Actually John Mist is an English man, who was born in London and raised as an orphan. In his childhood he arrives in India, adopts Bengali lifestyle, culture and civilization; opposes the English cloths, language and colonial operation in

Mishtigunj. Thus, all the effort made by John Mist refers the cultural superiority of East upon West. John Mist is hanged by British officials. So, he becomes historical legends as well as inspiration of the Tree Bride. The legendry of John Mist is too cultural hybridity in her cultural heritage during colonization.

In piecing together her ancestor's transformation from a docile Bengali Brahmin girl-child into an impassioned organizer of resistance against the British Raj, the contemporary narrator discovers and lays claim to unacknowledged elements in her American identity. Although the story of *The Tree Bride* is central, the drama surrounding the narrator, a divorced woman trying to get back with her husband, moves the novel back and forth through time and across continents with the issue of cultural hybridity.

In the novel *The Tree Bride*, the author has fused history, mysticism, treachery and enduring love in a suspenseful story about the lingering effects of past secrets. Tara Chatterjee, the protagonist of the novel narrates the story. The plot itself is convoluted in a suspenseful way while Tara Lata's wedding with tree resonates in miraculous interactions over the generations as a cultural heritage and identity. Similarly, her devotion to Gandhi's Salt March Movement establishes her as a national legend. Again, Mukherjee brings another historical legend John Mist, the founder of Mishtigunj who has a great impact upon Tara Lata consciousness of nationalism.

(c) Colonialism, Cultural Hybridity and Diaspora

The westerners always try to impose their norms and values to the people of non-west. They have the colonial mentality. In the period of colonization they had the tendency of imperial colonization by capturing the large territory of foreign land. But, in the phase of post colonization, they aim to colonize the world by imposing their cultures, thoughts, tendencies as well as norms and values. They aim to create the

universalism in the issue of culture by hegeomonizing the rest of the world apart from the west. The cultural imperialism functions through their superior mentality. In this regard, Lois Tyson writes:

Colonialist ideology was based on the colonizers assumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of indigenous people, the original inhabitants of the lands they invaded. The colonizers believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was civilized sophisticated, or as Post Colonial critics put it metropolitan. (366)

Therefore native people were defined as savage backward and undeveloped because their technology was more highly advanced and they ignored or swept aside the religions customs and codes of behavior of the people they subjugated. So the colonizers saw themselves at the centers of the world; the colonized were at the margins. The above idea also takes it granted that European culture becomes the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted.

In cultural imperialism, European culture up as standard for all humankind and other culture is today called Eurocentricism. A common instance of Eurocentric's is the notion called universalism. British European and later, American cultural standard-bearers judged all literature in terms of its universality. It means that literary text had to be of the universal themes and characters and judged on the standard of European literature. Universalism gave rise to European cultural superiority, too. The term other provides the colonized subject with a sense of their identity as somebody dependent, and secondary. In this way subjectivity of the colonized is continually showed in the gaze of the imperial other.

The non-west becomes a major locale for them to continue this imperialism and colonialism in one or the other forms. Colonialists made the study of orient and made misrepresentation of them. Through this misrepresentation gave the European a special vantage point to continue their colonization. The colonizers in the early phase of territorial colonialism terrified the colonized to accept thesis superiority. But after world war it's the territorial colonialism terrified the colonized to accept thesis superiority. But after world war it's the territorial colonialism transferred to textual colonialism. This textual discourse or colonialism forming continues to under pin the positive portrayals of the colonizers and the native portray also of the colonized.

The cultural hegemony of the west makes Third World obliged to follow the western way of life. The non westerners in particular migrated people to first world from third world can neither be completely like Westerners nor like Third world people. A hybrid culture is established, which is depicted in *The Tree Bride* through its protagonist Tara Chatterjee. Thus, to justify its hypothesis this research includes the help from the theorists like V. S. Naipaul, Michael Ondaatje, Edward Said, Robert Young, Chinua Achebe, Homi K. Bhabha and other as per as supervisor's suggestion.

The people from the third world to the Europe and America too are somehow hegeomonized by the similar impact of cultural imperialism. They have the consciousness of their cultural identity, heritage, myths, legends and racial identity. They have the awareness of their roots. That is why they try to resist against the western cultural imperialism as Tara Chatterjee tries in *The Tree Bride*; but they are unable to resist. Rather they lead themselves to the cultural hybridity by neither completely being western, nor eastern what sort of identity Tara Chatterjee gets.

Bharati Mukherjee has tried to resist against this mentality of cultural imperialism throughout the text *The Tree Bride* but she leads to the cultural hybridity as a Diaspora author.

(d) Mukherjee's Writings Trend

Bharati Mukherjee has long been known not only for her elegant, evocative prose but also for her characters. Her characters are influenced by ancient customs and traditions but also very much rooted in modern times. As Mukherjee herself a diaspora author living in America, teaching literature and writing about India and Indians, her literature captures the cultural hybridity of her characters.

Bharati Mukherjee was born on July 27, 1940 to wealthy parents, Sudhir Lal and Bina Mukherjee in Calcutta, India. She learned how to read and write by the age of three. In 1947, she moved to Britain with her family at the age of eight and lived in Europe for about three and a half years. By the age of ten, Mukherjee knew that she wanted to become a writer, and had written numerous short stories. Thus, Mukherjee's writing career begins.

After getting her B. A. from the University of Calcutta in 1959 and her M.A. in English and Ancient Indian Culture from the University of Baroda in 1961, she came to the United States of America. Having been awarded a scholarship from the University of Iowa, earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing in 1963 and her Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature in 1969. While studying at the University of Iowa, she met and married a Canadian student from Harvard, Clark Blaise, on September 19, 1963. The two writers met and, after a brief courtship, married within two weeks. Together, the two writers have produced two books along with their other independent works. Mukherjee's career a professor and her marriage to Blaise Clark

has given her opportunities to teach all over the United States and Canada. Currently she is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Alam the biographer of Mukherjee says “her 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” (7). He further mentions, “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” (10). Mukherjee's works correspond with biographer Fakrul Alam's catagorization of Mukherjee's life into three phases. Her earlier works, such as the *The Tiger's Daughter* and parts of *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, are her attempts to find her identity in her Indian heritage. Thus, almost all of her writings bear the issues of migrants, emigrants from Asia to Europe and America

"The Tiger's Daughter" is a story about a young girl named Tara who ventures back to India after many years of being away only to return to poverty and turmoil. This story parallels Mukherjee's own venture back to India with Clark Blaise in 1973 when she was deeply affected by the chaos and poverty of Indian and mistreatment of women in the name of tradition. In *Days and Night in Calcutta* she writes, “What is unforgivable is the lives that have been sacrificed to notions of propriety and obedience” (217). Her husband, however, became very intrigued by the magic of the myth and culture that surrounded every part of Bengal.; These differences of opinion, her shock and his awe, are seen in one of their joint publications, *Days and Nights in Calcutta*.

The second phase of her writing, according to Alam, encompasses works such as *Wife*, the short stories in *Darkness*, an essay entitled “An Invisible Woman,” and

The Sorrow and the Terror, a joint effort with her husband. These works originate in Mukherjee's own experience of racism in Canada, where despite being a tenured professor, she felt humiliated and on the edge of being a "housebound, fearful, affrievied, obsessive, and unforgiving queen of bitterness" (10) as mentioned by Alam. 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. 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,' Maya says. She means it and doesn't mean it."

In *Wife*, Mukherjee writes about a woman named Dimple who has been suppressed by such men and attempts to be the ideal Bengali wife, but out of fear and personal instability, she murders her husband and eventually commits suicide. The stories in *Darkness* further endeavor to tell similar stories of immigrants and women. In her third phase, Mukherjee is described as having accepted being, as Alam writes, "an immigrant, living in a continent of immigrants" (9). She describes herself as American and not the hyphenated Indian-American title:

I maintain that I am an American writer of Indian origin, not because I'm ashamed of my past, not because I'm betraying or distorting my past, but because my whole adult life has been lived here, and I write about the people who are immigrants going through the process of making a home here. I write in the tradition of immigrant experience

rather than nostalgia and expatriation. That is very important. I am saying that the luxury of being a U.S. citizen for me is that can define myself in terms of things like my politics, my sexual orientation or my education. My affiliation with readers should be on the basis of what they want to read, not in terms of my ethnicity or my race. (24)

Mukherjee continues writing about the immigrant experience in most of the stories in *The Middle Man and Other Stories*, a collection of short stories which won her the National Book Critics Circle Award for Best Fiction, *Jasmine*, and essays. These stories explore the meeting of East and West through immigrant experiences in the U.S. and Canada along with further describing the idea of the great melting pot of culture in the United States.

Jasmine develops this idea of the mixing of the East and West with a story telling of a young Hindu woman who leaves India for the U.S. after her husband's murder, only to be raped and eventually returned to the position of a caregiver through a series of jobs. The unity between the First and Third worlds is shown to be in the treatment of women as subordinate in both countries.

Her latest works include *The Holder of the World*, published in 1993, and *Leave It to Me*, published in 1997. *The Holder of the World* is a beautifully written story about Hannah Easton, a woman born in Massachusetts who travels to India. She becomes involved with a few Indian lovers and eventually a king who gives her a diamond known as the Emperor's Tear. The story is told through the detective searching for the diamond and Hannah's viewpoint. Mukherjee's focus continues to be on immigrant women and their freedom from relationships to become individuals. She also uses the female characters to explore the spatiotemporal (Massachusetts to India) connection between different cultures.

In *Leave It to Me*, Mukherjee tells the story of a young woman sociopath named Debby DiMartino, who seeks revenge on parents who abandoned her. The story reveals her ungrateful interaction with kind adoptive parents and a vengeful search for her real parents. The novel also looks at the conflict between Eastern and Western worlds and at mother-daughter relationships through the political and emotional topics by the main character in her quest for revenge. Candia McWilliam of *The London Review of Books* describes Mukherjee appropriately as "A writer both tough and voluptuous" in her works.

(e) Literature Reviews

Since the time of publication of Mukherjee's novel *The Tree Bride* has been taken from different angles it has attracted most of critical readings. Some critics have focused on the issue of feminism, viewed from allegorical angle whereas some other critics have taken the perspective of postcolonial tool to observe the text being the text written by the author from third world particularly from Indian. About the English literature from India some critics have viewed cynically. In this connection, T. V. Subba Rao says:

Our writing in English is produced under three conditions which invalidate its claim to the rank of literature. The authors and the reading public, having no spoken English to draw upon, stand in a false relation to the English languages; secondly they stand apart from our life and interests with can never achieve freedom completely from affections and incapacities. These limiting factors will always be there for our authors in English. (21)

According to Rao, Indian writings in English cannot claim any distinction as literature. He contends that it is one's own language that can be natural and

appropriate medium for literary expression. And, since English is not Indian language, Indians cannot express their deepest and inmost thought in it. Further, according to Rao; all the Indian fiction writers in English are “a very inferior breed of authors” (2). Critics like Rao blame both to poets and novelists who write in English from India cannot express the reality.

But unlike the critics such as Rao, there are other who appreciate the English writing from Indian writers. Now, the situation is different. In one hand English has become the global language and common and proper medium to communicate among the different communities. On the other hand, it has become the medium to share the cultural artifacts among the different ethnical communities of the world. In this sense, writing in English by Indian writers help to preserve the Indian cultures, heritages, arts by sharing it throughout the world. Keeping all these issues in consideration, the arrival of Bharati Mukherjee as an English novelist leaves a significant mark in literature as well as Indian culture. About Mukherjee’s writing in English G. S. Balaram Gupta writes:

Bharati Mukherjee, who gives what sounds in essence lukewarm praise to such Indian writers in English as Gandhi, Nehru, Anand, Bhattacharya, and R. K. Narayan, says, ‘But there will be some regret that these sensitive observers of life and of society in India found themselves incapable of writing in the language they had imbibed with their mother’s milk. (174)

Thus, Gupta not only offers a defense against the charge of Rao regarding Indian English writing cannot catch the reality, but also gives the example of Bharati Mukherjee connecting her with the writing tradition of past legend English writers from India such as Nehru, Anand and Bhattacharya. Furthermore, Gupta takes

Mukherjee as a mainstream English writer from India who has a sensitive observation of Indian people, society and culture.

To deal with the issue of cultural hybridity of Diaspora people and author it is better to deal with the theoretical modality of colonialism and post colonialism in particular through Diaspora identity. The cultural hybridity itself is the result of colonial power in particular the cultural imperialism of the west, this research paper aims to include the notion of colonialism and post colonialism as well as how it creates the condition of Diaspora identity without any fixed cultural identity as logos to the migrated people to first world from third world. The text also deal with the phase of colonialism through the flash back to the age of tree bride (Tara Lata Gangooley), freedom fighter of India Independent Movement with the picture of contemporary Bengali community which was itself was a contact zone of colonizer and colonized with the contact of distinct cultures together. So, there was also a trace of cultural hybridity between Indians and English which is analyzed through the perspective of cultural hybridity.

Chapter II: Post- Colonialism, Diaspora, Cultural Hybridity and Adjustment

Problems

(a) Post- colonialism, Colonialism and New Colonialism

Post colonial literature, by definition captures the texts written by the authors from the third world or the former colonies of the first world nations, covering the settings, subject matters of their homeland or native countries. The term 'post colonial' as well as its theorization became possible due to the contact, contrasts and the power relationship between colonizers and colonized because of the phase of European imperialism. That is why the term captures the various issues and dimension and study areas such as cultural diversity, hybridity, Diasporas, identity crisis, ethnical and racial issues etc. throughout its development in social, cultural, political and literature studies due to the imbalance power relationship between two forces- the colonizers and colonized. About the large sector of post colonial study the *Post-Colonial Studies Reader* mentions as follow:

While post colonial theory was a certain of literary study, it has provided a methodology for this wide range of disciplines because it has acknowledged the very specific forms of colonial and neo- colonial power operating in the world today. [. . .] One way in which the term 'post colonial' has come to be deployed is in the engagement with issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, and cultural difference and the power relations within them- a consequence of an expanded and more subtle understanding of the dimensions of neo- colonial dominance. (5)

It is clear that the term 'post colonial' covers the various issues in the dimension of its study. The writings from the post colonial nations always carry some features of post-

colonial literature because the text itself is shaped according to the power relationship between colonizers and colonized as the post colonial texts, the authors always try to capture the issue of diasporas, cultural hybridity, the resistance against the colonial power, celebration of self identity etc.

The term 'Post-Colonial' carries its implication that colonialism is now a matter of the post undermining colonialism economic, cultural and political reformative traces in the present. The Post Colonial inadvertently glosses over the fact that global hegemony even in the post cold war era, persists in forms other than over colonial rule. The hegemonic structure and conceptual frameworks generated over the colonial era has developed the consequences of worldwide cultural disjunction.

Post Colonialism as a concept enters into critical discourse its current meaning in the late 1970's and early 1980's. But both the practice and the theory of postcolonial resistance go back much back indeed to the origins of colonialism itself. Post Colonial studies, thus direct its critique against the cultural hegemony of European knowledge in an attempt to reassert the epistemological value and agency of non-European world.

'Colonialism' refers to a process of one country's domination over another people or country. This process seemed possible through either psychological or Military at first the specific culture of the colonies regarded as the source of power. It is difficult to control any country without surpassing or destroying it. Lois Tyson makes clear that colonialism and imperialism is similar which are fostered by the Orientalism. He puts it in this way:

After second world war such concept as cultural colonization, neo-colonization and cultural imperialism came into being. These concepts refer to the economic and cultural domination of one society by another's without the extension of territorial control. It becomes the major ideology that has clearly blurred the distinction between the terms colonialism and imperialism. (420-21)

The non-west becomes a major locale for them to continue this imperialism and colonialism in one or the other forms. Colonialists made the study of orient and made misrepresentation of them. Through this misrepresentation gave the European a special vantage point to continue their colonization. The colonizers in the early phase of territorial colonialism terrified the colonized to accept their superiority.

The critical analysis of the history culture literature and modes of discourse that is specific of the former colonies of England Spain France and other Europe imperial powers. These studies have focused especially on the Caribbean islands and South African scholars however extend the scope of such analyses also to the discourse and cultural productions of such countries as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand which achieved independence much earlier than the third world countries. Post is also an aspect of British Literature in viewed through a perspective of non west. It tries to address and resist the literature underwritten by colonial exploitation.

After World War II it is the territorial colonialism transferred to textual colonialism. This textual discourse or colonialism forming continues to underpin the positive portrayals of the colonizers and the native portray also of the colonized. In order to endorse the colonizers, Lois Tyson unveils the colonialist ideology in the following way, "Colonialist ideology was based on the colonizer's assumption of their

own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of indigenous people, the original inhabitants of the lands they invaded. The colonizers believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was civilized sophisticated” (366). The above idea also takes it granted that European culture becomes the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted. This line that stands European culture up as standard for all humankind and other culture is today called Eurocentricism. A common instance of Eurocentric's is the philosophy of 50 called universalism. British European and later, American cultural standard-bearers judged all literature in terms of its universality. It means that literary text had to be of the universal themes and characters and judged on the standard of European literature. Thus the colonization now is in the form of text and representation of universal culture.

Universalism gave rise to "European cultural superiority, too. The term other provides the colonized subject with a sense of their identity as somebody dependent, and secondary. In this way subjectivity of the colonized is continually showed in the gaze of the imperial other, the *grand-outré*.

In colonial literature, English man becomes an iconic figure being the medium of cultural imperialism of west. But in post colonial literature, third world authors; through the language, customs and other activities the colonialist apply the cultural hegemony of the west, as Elleke Boehmer writes in “*Networks of Resistance*” as, “Imperial world interconnected through the use of English clothes are the primary functions of the cultural imperialism.

Post colonial literature is different from colonial literature because it is the outcome of the independency of former colonies. Unlike the colonial literature it is written by the authors of such colonies. The primary purpose of the text written by colonialist author is to serve the colonialism. Through their writings they create

certain truths and discourse about colonized nations, culture and people with their superior mentality. Their false nation and negative analysis of the non western nation, culture and people are obliged to be hegeomonized before the Europeans.

The author from the post-colonial nation tries to present the counter discourse against the false nation made by the authors from first world about third world and people. Though they tries to resist such discourses made by colonial literature, they sometimes lost in the new mode of circumstances like cultural crisis and hybridity resulted by colonialism. In this regard, the cultural hybridity, diasporas and adjustment problem of the third world people are some part of colonialism in particular the part of cultural imperialism of Europe and America.

Colonialism brought organized system of government and law to many territories. The colonial power gradually built up administrative system based on European system of government. Gradually many colonial peoples became accustomed to regarding their territory as a separate country distinct from neighboring territories. In such territories they were influenced by the European ideas. They had the knowledge and confidence to rule their own territories. Albert Memmi elaborates the condition of colonialism in his *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*:

These people excluded from system will proclaim their exclusion in the name of national identity it is colonialism that celebrates the patriotism of the colonized. Maintained at the level of animals by an oppressive system they are not given any rights not even the right to live and their condition worsens day by day: when a person's only remaining option is in choosing how to die when they

have received from their oppressors only one gift despair what they got left to lose? (4)

On the other hand the colonizers also created fabricated discourse that simply overwhelms the tender mind of the colonized. His follower Edward said extended his theory of discourse and linked it with real social political struggle. He propagated that discourse and linked it with real social political struggle. He propagated that discourse are the result of real power struggle in the relation between the east and the west and the role of orientalism as a governing force in this relationship.

The cultural hybridity itself is the result of colonialism in particular the Cultural imperialism of the west. The notion of colonialism and post-colonialism as well as how it creates the condition of Diaspora identity without any fixed cultural identity or logos to the migrated people to first world from third world. The unequal distribution of power relationship between colonizer and colonized creates contact zone of colonizer and colonized with the contact of distinct cultures together. So, there was also a trace of cultural hybridity, cultural in-betweenness between various peoples. The Diaspora people goes through same cultural displacement and the and Diaspora author represents the same voice in their text.

(b) The Diaspora:

From the Greek meaning 'to disperse' Diasporas, the voluntary or forcible movement of people from their homelands into the new regions, is a central historical fact of colonization. Colonialism itself was a radically diasporic movement, involving the temporary or permanent dispersion and settlement of millions of Europeans over the entire world. The widespread effects of these migrations continue on a global label. Though, the diaspora is resulted by the migration; it is differ from mere migration. Bill

Ashcroft writes as, "[. . .] diaspora distinguishes itself from terms such as 'immigration' and 'immigrant' or 'migration' and 'migrant' in more fundamental way" (425).

The fundamental case of diaspora is the unusual migration of the people during colonialism and post-colonialism. The words like 'immigration' and 'immigrant' or 'migration' and 'migrant' just focus on a movement, disruption, and displacement rather than the perpetuation of complex patterns of symbolic and cultural connection that came to characterize the diasporic society. The dual identity in re-located diasporic subject could be addressed through the diaspora identity. About the duality in diasporic identity, Ashcroft writes:

This scattering leads to a splitting in the sense of home. A fundamental ambivalence is embedded in the term diaspora: a dual ontology in which the diasporic subject is seen to look in two directions- towards an historical cultural identity on one hand. and the society of relocation on the other. In the diasporic subject, then, we see in stark relief the hybrid and dual characteristics that are most often associated with post-colonial discourse. [. . .] Diasporic writing becomes strategic because the identity of the diasporic subject is actually inscribed. (425)

He talks about the duality in Diaspora subject. Here, two ontology means twostandpoints what diasporia people stand. First standpoint is ancestral historical background of the diaspora people and second is the society of relocation where the people have been living. The author from the diaspora too goes through the similar experience of cultural duality. They living in aboard create 'Imaginary Homeland' tries to write about their historical and cultural background creating a complex character. Ashcroft writes as, "For Salman Rushdie diaspora leads to the emergence of

'Imaginary Homelands' which continue to be written and re-written as the world takes on an ever more complex global character" (425) in relation with Rushdie's literary works.

The experience of Diaspora always gives a sense of loss. It is the loss of fixed cultural identity, home, logos and cultural background as Rushdie himself writes in "Imaginary Homelands;" "[. . .] the writer who is out-of-country and even out-of-language may experience this loss in an intensified form" (429). For Rushdie, it is not limited only within a sense of loss; rather it is a powerful medium or subject matter to express for Diaspora author. In his own words, "The broken glass is not merely a mirror of nostalgia. It is also, I believe, a useful tool with which to work in the present" (429).

The Indian diaspora has its own distinct feature than other diaspora. It is due to the imperialism of Great Britain. People migrated to the west from India have their distinct experience. They are haunted by their past. Thus, they try to move toward the documentation of the past. In this regard, Bijaya Mishra says:

Unlike most other diasporas whose first movement out of the homeland can no longer be established with absolute precision, the Indian diaspora presents us with a case history that has been thoroughly documented. That is largely because the Indian diaspora began as part of British imperial movement of labour to the colonies. (447)

Indian diaspora is distinct in nature as Vijaya Mishra mentions. Similarly, Amit S. Rai talks about the double space occupied by the diaspora (multicultural hysteria within the US and rapid racial absorption for the homeland). Rai says as, "this textual construction of the diasporics to be 'affirmative action' in the United States and be

against 'reservations' in India, to lobby for a tolerant pluralism in the west, and also support a narrow sectarianism in the East" (42).

Rushdie being an Indian born English author; mainly deals with the diasporic identity of Indian migrated to Europe and America. He even deals with the diasporic Indian born authors and their writings. Keeping these factors in consideration; he says, "It may be that when the Indian writer who writes from outside India tries to reflect that world, he is obliged to deal in broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (429).

The broken mirrors refer to the broken images of the past ancestral culture, cultural roots, heritage and ancestry faced by diasporic authors. It is due to his/her distance with his/her past heritage. This dislocation makes the diaspora people to forget some factors of his ancestry and to adapt some factor of new location. A kind of hybrid form of culture is born locating them in cultural in-betweenness. Diaspora creates a hybrid culture as Stuart Hall says:

The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (438)

One of the obvious features of diaspora is the relocation and the displacement of culture. The displacement is compared and contrast with a journey in Avtaha Brah's notion of diaspora. He talks about the displacement. For him the diaspora is "[. . .] the image of journey. Yet not every journey can be understood as diaspora. Diasporas are clearly not the same as casual travel. [. . .] paradoxically, diasporic journeys are

essentially about settling down about putting roots 'elsewhere' (443).

Diaspora thus is the settlement in new location, locality and cultural settings.

Throughout this replacement creates the situation of cultural hybridity. The diaspora people are neither completely in their past cultural nor completely in present locale. Hybridity and cultural in-betweenness could not be marred to study the feature of Diaspora. Due to the clash of two or more than two cultures caused by the migration of people creates the circumstance of cultural hybridity in diasporic people. Diaspora and the cultural in-between could not be separated in post-colonial study framework.

(c) The Cultural Hybridity

Hybridity is the pure product of colonization; that is why most of the post-colonial writings concern with the hybridized nature as *Post Colonial Studies Reader* writes, "Most post-colonial writing has concerned itself with the hybridized nature of post-colonial culture as the strength rather than a weakness" (183). He regards hybridity as the part of colonialism. It is due to the cultural contact or clash as he further asserts, "[. . .] an integral part of the new formations which arise from the clash of cultures characteristic of imperialism" (183).

The non westerners in particular migrated people to first world from third world can neither be completely like Westerners nor like Third world people.

A hybrid culture is established. Bill Ashcroft writes:

It emphasizes how hybridity and the power it realizes as may well be seen to be the characteristic feature and contribution of the post-colonial, allowing a means of evading the replication of the binary categories of the past and developing new anti-monolithic models of cultural exchange and growth (183).

The cultural in-between gives the diaspora people the identity of cultural hybridity and adjustment problem. It places the experience of third space as mentioned.

Homi K. Bhabha takes the cultural hybridity as the third space of cultural identity. For him, the unusual power relation between colonizer and colonized creates the third space of enunciation due to the cross cultural contact. There is the ambivalent cultural identity to the migrated people and even to the cross breeding people. Bhabha regards cultural hybridity as the third space of cultural identity as he says, "The intervention of the 'Third space' which makes the structure of meaning and references an ambivalent process" (156). The third space is the position of cultural 'in-betweenness'. It carries the burden and meaning of culture. It challenges the fixed cultural identity, ancestral heritage what the Diaspora people face as a Diaspora identity.

Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural exchange. It commonly refers to the creation of new trans-cultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. It is cultural hybridity of Diaspora people. Bill Ashcroft writes:

Hybridity occurs in post-colonial societies both as a result of conscious moments of cultural suppression, as when the colonial power invades to consolidate political and economic control, or when settler-invaders dispossess indigenous peoples and force them to 'assimilate' to new social patterns. It may also occur in later periods when patterns of immigration from the metropolitan societies and from other imperial areas of influence continue to produce complex cultural palimpsest with the post-colonial world. (183)

About the cultural hybridity the non-west becomes a major locale for them to

continue. But, the transportation, migration, immigration of the third world people to the first world metropolitan cities in search of job opportunity is the major cause of cultural hybridity in current post-colonial phase. They move to western metropolitan cities with the some palimpsests of their non western background. They adopt the non western values and create the situation of cultural in-betweenness. Even in course of language, there is a hybridized form. The contact of more than two languages creates the situation of bilingualism. Bilingualism too is a form of cultural in-betweenness or hybridity caused by the unequal power relationship between colonizer and colonized as Chinua Achebe writes:

I have always been fond of stories and intrigued by language- first Igbo and later English which I began to learn at about the age of eight. I don't know for certain but I probably have spoken more words in Igbo than English but I have definitely written more words in English than Igbo. Which I think makes me perfectly. [. . .] We lived at the cross roads of cultures. (190)

The references tell about the experience faced by Achebe himself. It evokes the reality of cultural in-betweenness in the case of language. Achebe comes in contact with two languages- English and his native language Igbo. He can write English better than Igbo but he has better word power in Igbo than English in speaking. This is the experience faced by people who come in contact with two languages at same period.

The experiences faced by the Achebe, Rushdie and Bhabha refer the cultural hybridity. It presupposes the condition of cultural displacement and dislocation. Their cultural position is seems as if the third position. They neither belong to their native culture ultimately, nor are they completely fit with western norms and values. It refers the cultural in-betweenness position and the adjustment problem what a Diaspora author feels and expresses through writing.

Chapter III. Analyzing Cultural Hybridity and Adjustment Problems in *The Tree Bride*

Bharati Mukherjee presents Tara Chatterjee as a protagonist as well as narrator of the text *The Tree Bride*. She has been teaching English literature in an university of USA since years. She is from Bengali Brahmins family, who was born in a small village called Mishtigunj of India located near the city of Calcutta. The novel develops while Tara trails back to India in search of her cultural identity from America where she feels identity crisis. Mukherjee portrays her protagonist shaped in cultural in-betweenness of east and west. She is in the position of cultural hybridity. People from the post-colonial nations who are migrated towards the west from non-west of post-colonialist nation have the similar experience of cultural in-betweenness or hybridity as well as they have some sort of experience of Diaspora people.

The Tree Bride begins with the same cultural in-betweenness of its protagonist as she is in California. Mukherjee writes, "Bish and I were standing on the back porch of my house in Upper Height on a warm, November, California, night" (1). Narrator Tara Chatterjee gives no more details about her house in California, rather she suddenly flashes back towards her childhood memory in Kolkata as she says "When I was a very small child back in Kolkata, my paternal great-grand mother told me a very strange very moving story about life before birth call it the Hindu version of the stork legend"(4). Its sudden shift from California to India presupposes that Tara Chatterjee is living the life of cultural in-betweenness of west and east.

Tara Chatterjee no more talks about her American life rather she turns back to her six year old when her great-grandmother used to tell the story about reincarnation, human souls and cycle of birth based upon Hindu mythology. The reference gives

some hints that Tara Chatterjee is inspired by her Hindu myths and legends, her ancestral heritage and past. She narrates:

The Cosmos is created sustained, destroyed and re-created over and over again, but only one town on earth is spared during the period of cosmic dissolution. She named the town: Kashi. For my parents and my two older sister, I know Kashi by its secular name, Vanarasi, the old British Benares. But my great-grandmother set me straight. Kashi she explained is both the city of light and the city of Liberating Cremation. The god Shiva carries Kashi on the prongs of his trident. When the cosmos chars into total blankness, kasha glows because Shiva created it as a sacred space where to die is to be saved. She intended to die in Kashi, she insisted. (5)

Tara Chatterjee explains the importance of holy city Kashi re-narrating the story told by her maternal great-grandmother. The lines further give details that why kasha is regarded as sacred city for Hindus. Her great-grandmother desired to die and have funeral ceremony in Kashi. While Tara Chatterjee is nine year old her great-grandmother dies. Though she dies in her common bed she is regarded as if she is in Kashi. It is expressed as, “Kashi exists only in our minds my father explained. You can be sure that she died in Kashi and not upstairs in her bed” (5).

The experience faced by Tara Chatterjee in America represents the mentality of Diaspora people. Though they are living material life in America they never forget their spiritual part of east. Tara Chatterjee being a Hindu woman from Indian society remembers her cultural heritage India, its spirituality, the stories and myths told by the elder members of her family. Chatterjee lives a nostalgic life in America. This

nostalgia of past cultural heritage appears in her memory time and again. The memory of past, ancients and cultural roots of third world in the first world is the obvious feature of Diaspora people. This feature of Diaspora captures the reality of cultural in-betweenness. It places the people in third space. Tara too is living in this third cultural space. She is neither completely in America nor completely in India. Her position is the third space of Diaspora people as mentioned by Homi K. Bhabha.

The prologue of the novel gives sufficient details that the narrator of the text is shaped in cultural in-betweenness of west and east. She spends most of her narration in the description of the details about her past heritages, remembering her childhood. She talks about Hindu mythologies, issues of incarnations and furthermore she connects such issues to denote the significance of the holy city Kashi. Text itself is the representation of certain voices, norms values and ideology. From this certain reference from the prologue of the novel, it is clear that Mukherjee has tried to represent the cultural hybridity and adjustment problem of Diaspora people.

After the prologue, Tara Chatterjee gives account of her visit to Dr. Khanna in San Francisco. It is her regular pregnancy check up. The conversation between Dr. Khanna and Chatterjee not only reveals about the fact of Bengali culture but also justifies that she believes in destiny, as her ancestors did. In this regard, Mukherjee writes; “Do you believe destiny, Mrs. Chatterjee?” I let it pass. Who doesn’t in my family? Some cultural habits never die” (11). Easterners believe in destiny because they are spiritual. Westerners do not believe in destiny because they are material. The narrator believes in destiny though she lives in America. From this point it is clear that the protagonist could not be a complete American. She cannot be a complete material. She cannot forget her past as she experiences the cultural dislocation.

The narrator reveals that she like other members of her family believes in destiny. She without any hesitation reveals it even she is in America not in India. The reference clarifies that the narrator's remembrance of her cultural identity and heritage though she is very far from her homeland. In America she has been haunting by the memory of India, in particular by her Bengali community. It gives her insecurity of her fixed cultural identity.

After the reference with Dr. Khanna, Tara Chatterjee returns to her marriage life. She reveals about the incident of her marriage with Bish Chatterjee. Bish is her husband who is six feet tall as well as from same Bengali cultural heritage. Tara Chatterjee's marriage with Bish too, gives the emphasis upon her consciousness of her rituals and cultures. Like Tara Chatterjee, Bish too is from same "Brama Samoj." It makes easier to deal with her family about her choice unlike her other sister, Tara Chatterjee has selected her bridegroom from same cultural heritage, cultural roots and caste.

It is not due to being old fashioned, but due to being conscious on her cultural identity. Because her older sister have married with somebody else from another culture and caste. About her pride of selecting bride groom from same cultural heritage she compares and construct with the selection of her older sisters. In this regard Murkherjee writes:

My older sister, Padma the one I call Didi didn't marry until her late thirties and that was in New Jersey to a divorced Punjabi. My middle sister, Parvati found her own husband in Boston and returned with him to Bombay. Purely by co-coincidence, he happened to be a Bengali Brahmin from a decent Calcutta family, so no one complained. I, as

youngest, upheld family honour and married Bish, the perfect groom, in the old fashioned arranged way. (14-15)

Tara Chatterjee thus marries with the person from same cultural background. She prides to be a wife to Bengali from her similar ancestral heritage. Bish Chatterjee, by profession is a good athlete. He is a cricketer Tara Chatterjee, in one hand feels glorious because she is able to follow her culture properly on the other hand she accepts the role of a wife of a Bengali Brahmin. By nature in Bengali or eastern culture, wife accepts the inferior position than her husband. They feel glorious on their husbands' success. Tara's acceptance of such role is reflected as she says. For ten years I was his 'Jewel in the crown, his 'Rani' in magazine covers" (15).

It is the Indian culture in which women feel solace in her husband's success. Woman celebrates their household roles. They never complain about being constricted in household activities. Rather they feel glorious with their inward activity family, children etc. There is not any dissatisfaction of Tara Chatterjee with her household roles. As a part of her ancestral heritage and culture she is happy with her traditional household duty. In this regard, Bharati Mukherjee writes, "By twenty-two I had satisfied all my ancestral duties. I was married; I had a son material comfort, an admired husband-what else is there?" (16). The reference proves that Tara Chatterjee seems as a typical Indian woman in America.

Time onward while the plot develops it is known that Tara Chatterjee is a divorcee. It is revealed as, "In the divorce, I refused the split of assets in favor of child support and Bish's continued benign involvement in my life" (17). From this point, it is revealed that the marriage between Tara and Bish Chatterjee ends with divorce. In American society divorce between couple is not unfamiliar issue. But, unlike in

America, Indian society has much more strong mechanism in marriage. So, there is no chance of divorce as well as no hierarchical relationship between couple. After the downfall of their marriage, Tara Chatterjee concentrates on the topic of marriage. She notices the differences about the nation of marriage, relationship and family values between American and Indian culture. Mukherjee writes:

Marriage had not been part of the same hierarchy of obligation. Marriage was something done once and for all time to satisfy everyone expectations, then put aside. Marriage was self sustaining the way our grandparents' had been. But those are Indian assumption not American. (19)

Tara Chatterjee gives details about the married life. She blames to the American assumption behind the failure of her married life. In American society the relationship is not smooth, cool and harmonious between couple; which is revealed throughout the narration. The speaker as well as the protagonist of the text Tara Chatterjee though being an Indian rooted female character, she could no more bind within Indian cultures and assumptions. Rather she follows the American way of separation.

She compares and contrasts the American and Indian assumption about marriage. According to the Indian assumption, marriage has not the hierarchical relationship between bride and bridegroom; it is not the matter of obligation. It is rather happens by satisfying everyone's expectation. As her ancestors marriage is self-sustaining. Tara Chatterjee is not limited within these Indian assumptions of marriage. Rather she leads the way of divorce. Here too her cultural identity is not fixed. She is in the position of third cultural space.

According to the narration all these aspects of marriage are Indian assumptions. It is not the American assumptions. Protagonist Tara Chatterjee lives in America with her American life style. That is why she blames upon the American assumption about the marriage for her failure married life. Her own reference of marriage makes her obliged to think about the marriage values and ethics of her Indian society. Indian society, there is no hierarchical relationship in marriage. Furthermore marriage happens with all's satisfaction. In this regard there is less chance to fail the marriage life. Similar nation, ethics and mentality marriage keeps it long lasting.

Tara Chatterjee thus, not only compares the American and Indian assumption about marriage, but also valorizes the Indian assumption, stressing upon the permanency of Indian marriage unlike the American assumption about marriage and relationship. From this point, it is clear that Tara Chatterjee though lives and raises in American society with American lifestyle, she is fascinated with her Indian assumption of marriage and other culture artifacts. As the third world people living in the first world, she admires the third world values but could not apply them in America. It also places her in cultural in-between positions.

In Indian society marriage happens and the trace of the relationship never ends. Tara Chatterjee is well aware about this fact. It is revealed as she narrates, "Wife of Bish Chatterjee is my full identity. If it had plans for future, they would be to follow my husband where as he went probably back to India" (19). Being a woman from India the guest of marriage and her ex-husband is identity never leaves Tara Chatterjee. She cannot live by forgetting all her cultural roots, heritages, rituals and assumptions. She tries to escape from her husband's identity. It is reflected as

Mukherjee writes, “I wandered if wife was the only role permitted to me, if these was a way of being in this country with my own identity” (19).

Tara Chatterjee sees her ancestral heritage of East Bengal as the ultimate way to search her own identity. As far as possible Tara Chatterjee aims to escape from identity connected with Bish (her ex-husband) so she returns back to East Bengal to search her original heritage, culture, roots and ancestry. In this regard, she narrates:

The first time I went back to India on my own it wasn't just to see relatives. I took Rahi with me on my own American-style roots search, into the East Bengal now Bangladesh of my grand-parents and a hundred generations of Gongoolys and Bhattacharjees. My friends and even my sister thought I'd gone crazy or very American. In particular, I wanted to see this place called Mishtigunj that everyone in the family had talked about, but no one had visited in sixty years. (20)

After divorce Tara Chatterjee feels identity-less, rootless and lacks her self because everyone where she is followed by her husband's name. While people feels identity-less and rootless they seek for their cultural heritage. Because cultural roots, heritage and ancestry are directly connected with one's identity. In search of self identity Tara Chatterjee comes back to West-Bengal as an specific place she aims to go Mishtigunj. She not only goes to see her relatives but also to seek her cultural heritage as a medium of search of her cultural identity.

Mishtigunj is the place of her ancestors though her grandfather had left the place already. All her family members have forbidden the place departing themselves to Calcutta. Tara Chatterjee too is born and raised in Calcutta; she has not gone to Mishtigunj where the thousand of generations of her ancestors has grown up. She

aims to see the village about where, everyone of her family member talk but no one had visited in past sixty years. As the ultimate solution of her rootlessness, Tara Chatterjee visits Mishtigunj. She takes the village not as strange but as a familiar one. In this regard she says, “Until I’d seen Mishtigunj, I thought I was a total Calcuttan. But when I walked through the alleys of the old town, I felt I know the streets nothing surprised me” (20).

Tara Chatterjee thus goes to the forgotten and forbidden heritage of her ancestors. She even reveals that how the Mishtigunj is forgotten through the generation with migration as, “I felt for the first time now recent my family’s Calcutta identity was, just two generation, how shallow those urban roots were not much deeper than Rabi’s in California. I saw my life on a board spectrum, with Calcutta not at the centre, but just another station on the dial (20).

Here for Tara Chatterjee, heritage of her ancestors becomes the medium of her identity. That is why she after divorce with her husband comes back to visit it. Cultural heritage, places, and ancestry are the medium of solace for her. All there aspects of cultural heritage for Tara Chatterjee are the medium of solace for her. All there aspects of cultural heritage for Tara Chatterjee are the medium of challenge of her American identity. Through the awareness of past heritage the protagonist not only tries to find her original identity but also resists against the American identity and western values ethics and assumptions. Tara Chatterjee faces identity problem in American society. The identity crisis leads her to question herself that ho is she.

Tara Chatterjee too, has such aspect in American society after being divorcee in American society. She is suffered by identity crisis. The issue of identify is the major concern of post colonial study because the diaspora people like Tara Chatterjee

who are bound in cultural hybridity are suffered due to the rootlessness and identity crisis. Tara Chatterjee is confined on the position of identity crisis and rootlessness. She is brought back to her ancestral heritage Mishtigunj. She is connected with her generation of Bengali- Brahmin. Bharati Mukherjee by bringing back Tara Chatterjee to Mishtigunj in search of her cultural heritage from American society where she is suffering from rootlessness tries to depict the cultural hybridity and adjustment problem in *The Three Bride*.

Tara Chatterjee narrates her visit to Dr. Khanna. In this second visit she not only talks about Mishtigunj with her but also gets some old documents about this sacred place through Dr. Khanna. Dr Khanna is father once owned tea state in Calcutta during the period of British Colony. Dr. Khanna is keeping those papers waiting to the precious movement to handle to a suitable person, who is interested with Bengali culture and civilization. Thus, she meets Tara Chatterjee and handles it to her. About those historical papers and its significance in Bengali heritage, she further asserts:

‘These paper from my grandfather have been travelling for nearly a century across half the world, and they’ve settled on me like a forty-year pregnancy. If you don’t take them away today, I swear I’ll burn them. I have a feeling that you might be the perfect person for them Mrs. Chatterjee. ‘Tara, please.’ ‘They are a history of a place you know very well, I think they’ll be like a RAM upgrade. (26)

Dr. Khanna handles these historical papers from her grandfather to Tara Chatterjee because Mrs. Chatterjee is interested with her ancient heritage as her pure root, identity and cultural background. Furthermore, Tara Chatterjee is planning to write a

story of her namesake Tara Lata, probably the papers would reveal the fact about Tara Lata. The protagonist Tara Chatterjee B planning to write a book about Tara Lata as she says I had been writing a book about my sister [...] and then I'd started on something new and strange. This was a distant relative we called the Tree Bride, my great-great-ant, a priest of light from the remotest, darkest galaxy of my life" (22).

Tara Chatterjee assumes that the grandfather of Victoria Khanna must have known the Tree Bride. The Tree Bride who is Tara Lata Gangooly by her name and and protagonist is fascinated with her life as she says, "I have visited Mishtigunj three times in the past six years and have been writing about it, and the Tree Bride, ever since" (27). Thus, the novel's protagonist is going to mite about the Tree Bride. That is why she collects ancient documents from Victoria Khanna and as well as visits west Bengal and Mishtigunj time and again.

Now the text enters into the vintage point. The rootless protagonist in search of her cultural heritage reaches to her historical place Mishtigunj. She not only concentrate on her forefather's heritage but also reveals the story of her historical legends the Tree Bride. The historical figure the Tree Bride is bounded with her two qualities in her life which makes the protagonist regard her as her namesake. The first quality inherent within the Tree Bride is her representation of Hindu culture, rituals and myths.

Tree Bride had devoted her final life for the independence movement of India from British Colonization. Being a strong follower of Hindu culture and ritual, The Tree Bride is the character of glory of Indian culture. She becomes the symbol of cultural heritage and rituals for Hindu community are particular for the Brahmin

Samaj of West Bengal. In this regard, she is the icon of Hindu community, culture and rituals.

Similarly, her later life could be analyzed through her awareness of national independence who has devoted her life against British imperialism and died on the prison at her age of eighty three. In this regard, from both perspectives and aspects Tara Lata (the Tree Bride) could be regarded as an iconic figure of resistance against colonialism and cultural imperialism of west as reflected in the post colonial text *The Tree Bride*.

Bharati Mukherjee writes the text *The Tree Bride* revealing the story of Tara Chatterjee the protagonist and narrator of the text. The text itself is the story of Tara Chatterjee's relation and contact with her old ancestral heritage where the Tree Bride appears as an iconic figure of Bengali community being herself as a cultural and historical legend. Mukherjee writes the text, but periodically the story bears another story that how her protagonist Tara Chatterjee writes the novel about her historical legend Tree Bridge revealing all the mysteries. It further depicts the cultural hybridity during colonialism in West Bengal.

The text bears same sort of autobiographical quality because there is similarity between the protagonist and author herself. Author does not write the story of legend of the Tree Bride rather through her protagonist Tara Chatterjee, who is writing and researching about the Tree Bride, reveals the story of the Bride. The politics of representing another figure to tell the story of the Tree Bride is to show the impact of one's own myths, legends and history to life to cultural in-betweenness blending both the western and eastern norms and values. It is a documentation of the past as most of the diaspora authors go through as mentioned by Mishra.

The Tree Bride is regarded as cultural icon of Bengali Brahmin Community. The paper brought from Dr. Khanna reveals only the fact “Tree Bride-she’d been proxy-married to a tree at the age of five-but nothing about her later year except her death at British hand in 1943” (28). The Paper were written by British. That is why they did not covers much about Tree Bride who is legend for Indian people and culture. But, protagonist with her strong determination to write book about her searches more hidden realities of the Tree Bride.

According to the narration the Tree Bride was narrator’s great-greatest the daughter of her great-great-grandfather, Jai Krishna Gangooly. The real name of the Tree Bride was Tara Lata and she was born during the early years of national attorney. With the timeframe of Tara Lata’s birth, the narrator pictures about the place Mishtigunj where Tara Lata was born. The place was a contact zone between Hindus and Muslims. There was the religious harmony. About the Mithigunj Tara Chatterjee says, “We’re been trained to think of Mishtaigunj as home in ways that our adopted horrors Calcutta and California, must never be. Ancestors come and go, but one’s native village one’s desh, is immutable” (29).

Tara Chatterjee returns to Mishtigunj, her ancient heritage to her forefathers. From there she tricks the story of Tara Lata, the Tree Bride. Past for Tara Chatterjee is a past of her glory, heritage and identity. It never ends. She asserts the idea of William Faulker about the past as “I believe it was Faulkner who said the past isn’t past. The past isn’t even dead” (29).

Thus, Tara Chetterjee returns to the past during the period of colonization of Great Britain in India through the story of Para Lata (The Tree Bride). The text

unveils the reality of cultural contact in Mishtigunj during colonization. The history of her native place too is not untouched with the fact of cultural hybridity.

Mukherjee's narrativization of the 'past' gives the heavenly representation of her ancient heritage Mishtigunj. Bharati Mukherjee in *The Tree Bride* presents the similar counter discourse about the people, culture and place of Bengal by evoking the ancient heritage of Bengali Brahmin community in Mishtigunj. Mukherjee presents Bengali community with high academic consciousness. Through Tara Lata (*The Tree Bride*) she represents the view that women too had the access to education knowledge and rationality. About Tara Lata learning language; Tara Chatterjee narrates:

When I realized that Tara Lata had been an actual little girl who grew up surrounded by other little girl servants and had taught herself to read Bengali, English and Persian, it seemed to me a miracle on the order of Helen Keller. The fact that she then taught the languages to the girls and boys of the village made her Annie Sullivan, and that she had fought against the colonial authorities on the side of the Indian nationalists, a Joan of Arc. (37)

The major iconic figure Tara Lata (*The Tree Bride*) with her name the text is nomenclature, represents an icon of Bengali rituals by massing with tree after the death of her finance in one hand. On the other hand, her devotion towards the public education and her teaching to other contemporary peoples gives the idea that there was consciousness and knowledge through history in Bengali community.

The connection of Tree Bride with Bengali rituals and Culture itself is the medium to express the significance of native culture and rituals itself is the medium of resistance to western culture. Because, the expression of native culture and ritual in

literature means it gives emphasis on individual native culture as the medium of blurring the nation of high and low cultures. This cultural awareness always helps to resist the cultural imperialism of the west. Because, west always apply the cultural monopoly throughout the world. It creates the situation of cultural hybridity in natives. Due to the unequal power relationship between colonizer and colonized there is an unequal exchange of cultural artifacts between them. West Bengal in colonization undergoes through same process. Tara Chatterjee's ancient heritage too was not untouched with this fact.

As Tara Chatterjee narrates, “[. . .] My proud claims of a Mishtingjung desh with a great-great-aunt, Tara Lata Gangooley, the Tree Bride, as a namesake” (59). The story unfolds the mystery of this ancient heritage Mishtingjung, the home of Tara Lata. Shy narrated, “They called it the Mist Mahal. Here is the tree Bride stayed [...] Home of Tara Lata Gangooly (1874-1943), Freedom Fighter and Martyr known to the world as Tara-Ma" (59).

Through the Tree Bride the author uncovers the history of Mishtigunj as well as life and martyrdom of another legend John Mist, who had settled the life in that place and was named after his name. Actually, John Mist is an English mass who had arrived in India in his childhood as an orphan with the crew of British ship. He is devoted to his captain. But some selfish British pirates attacks the ship kills the captain's mess and innocent boy called is degenerated from British people. As the result, he is devoted to the Hinduism and Bengali community. As the award of his bravery, he has got some land in Bengal where he settles the place called Mishtigung with harmonious society including Hindu, and Muslim community. About John Mist Tara Chatterjee narrates, “My ancestors had been lived to that emerging village by the

persuasiveness of John Mist. He offered them a chance to exercise their professions free to British influence” (63).

“Mishtigunj is the story of John Mist, [...] Tara Ma comes much later (65) reveals that John Mist was the old history of Mishtigunj. Author give similar emphasis to John Mist as she gives to Tara Lata. Because, John Mist not only established the village, but also adapted the Bengali culture and civilization as if it was his own cultural heritage. In this regard Tara Chatterjee narrates:

Along with not speaking the English language, Mist added another vow-never to wear English clothes' again. He tossed the borrowed jacket out the window. The Seaman's trunk held the entire native wardrobe, kurtas, Pajamas, shawls, and turban, which he would need or own for years to come. (144)

John Mist though born in London as an English boy leaves all English culture with his settlement in Bengal. He leaves speaking English and starts to speak Bengali with native tone. He even leaves wearing English clothes rather he prefers wearing Kurtas, Pajamas and Shawls as a typical Bengali people. John Mist, though being an English man becomes an iconic figure to represent the cultural in-betweenness of west and east. Mukherjee's legend John Mist leaves all the English culture and follows the Bengali. It further creates the circumstance of cultural hybridity in Mishtigunj.

It is revealed in the text as, “I am told that you find British law and British customs oppressive to your fine sense of Hindu justice” (147). The remark is by John Mist narrated to Tree Bride by her father Jai Krishna. That is why following the way traced by John Mist, Tara Lata involves in Indian independence movement against British colonization. It is the result of John Mist contribution for Bengali community.

So, Mist is told as “John Mist stands out as the perfect, and may be the last ‘British Hudoo’” (149). All these references justify the place as the contact zone of the clash between English and Indian cultures.

It is revealed, “Just outside that police thana is the public square where John Mist and Raffek Hai were hanged in the fall of 1880. In that same police station, the Tree Bride died” (62). The story of Tree Bride and John Mist is interrelated. Tara Lata is just six year old when John mist and Raffek Hai were hanged. The vision of their myrtidum haunts the Tree Bride throughout her life. She herself is guided by the idol of these two legends. In her interview with Mr. Treadwell she reveals as, “Everyone worshipped John Mist. He was our father an our mother. We named the village for him after he died” (214). Furthermore, Tara Lata explains the exaction of John Mist and Raffek Hai:

On that night my father and I, and Mr. Mist and Mr. Hai, were seated on a mat. They were drinking tea. Musicians had been called in. It was to be regular mela for the entire towns. But the soldiers arrived with their rifles out and bayonets drawn and proceeded to tie up Mr. Mist and Mr. Hai, the two most noble gentle men I have ever known, and march them out the gates onto a waiting bullock cast. They were thrown into the cart like bundles of trash. (213)

Thus during the childhood of Tara Lata they were killed by British troops. They were two most noble men she had ever seen. It impacts Tara Lata. As the result later she herself involves in independence movement. Living in Mist Mahal she protests against British Colonialism. She had lived her life like virgin many and had helped the needy one. Her devotion to Gandhi salt march movement made her as the legend.

Her life establishes herself as a goddess of Mishtigunj. In this connection Mukherjee writes, “Years later, in the eyes of many, she had become a goddess, prayed to by unmarried women needing husbands and wives seeking sons” (255).

As its title suggests the entire text surrounds around the cultural and political life of its legend Tara Lata, the Tree Bride. She lives her life in Mist Mahal helping the villagers, teaching the literacy and following the strong paths and rituals of Hindu community as a child widow like virgin marry. She has the strong cultural and religious awareness as well as belief in Indian’s independence. Her devotion to Gandhi's salt march movement and her death inside the police custody establishes her as a national legend. In this sense, the figure of Tara Lata itself is a powerful fusion of Indian culture and resistance against British imperialism. In this sense, the fusion of two figures the tree bride and John Mist in *The Tree Bride* is the powerful fusion of English and Indian cultures.

Tara Lata is a fusion of myths, rituals and political awareness. She donates her property for national independence movement. Even her dowry which was buried in her marriage with Sundari tree is dig out and contributed for Gandhi’s salt movement. In this regard Mukherjee writes:

Where generations of Mishtigunj men had gone out at night with picks and shovels digging around the stumps of every and feeled tree in hopes of finding the Tree Bride’s buried dowry gold, young Gul Mohammed had sat out one night in 1930 armed with a map drawn by the Tree Bride herself. She who had never left her marriage- house asked only that he place a flower-garland around the tree and say a Sanskrit prayer. (61)

Tara Lata herself makes a map of location of the tree in deep forest which she had married to take the gold, buried in her wedding as dowry. Though, Tara Lata never leaves her house, she has strong feeling or resistance against British imperialism. Though, in her involvement in national independence movement she never leaves her rituals of Hindu spirituality. That is why she is remarkable for her strong belief in Eastern spiritualism as well as consciousness of national freedom.

Tara Lata is the past, history, culture, myth rituals and legend for the narrator Tara Chatterjee. She by relation is great-great-aunt of the narrator. Past, history, culture and ancient heritage are the source of identity of Third-World people like Tara Chatterjee. In this regard she in search of her cultural identity reveals the legendry of Tara Lata, rituals and cultures of Bengali community as well as the colonial history of British imperialism. By doing so, the protagonist not only finds her cultural heritage as her original identity but also feels solace that sees the eastern values and spirituality is higher than the western materialism.

She even precisely presents the Hindus myths in the Hindu, spirituality, the holy place Kashi and river Ganga as the ultimate solace of eastern civilization. In this regard she narrates, "An old religious training kicks in. Yama comes calling and there is no warning, no delaying only the proper respect to be shown. Death is a different state of being that's all the important thing is to western the soul to its next safe hasber and not impede it in any way" (243). Here Tara Chatterjee seems as if a pure Indian according to her ancestry but her cultural identity is not fixed. When the India came in contact with Britain, it leads to the cultural clash between west and east.

Tara Chatterjee goes through the in-betweenness even in the course of language. Her schooling bears the quality of cultural hybridity. The childhood

memory of Tara clarifies the hybridity in the course of language what she learnt throughout her schooling. She joined the Convent School where she went through English language and writings. In this regard, Mukherjee writes, "My sisters and I received a typical upper-middle-class Calcutta convent school English language education" (43). Bharati Mukherjee unveils the reality of West Bengal that was too not untouched with the fact of cultural hybridity. After British Imperialism almost all of the India goes through the clash of cultures – the British and Indian. People of India got bilingual experience, which was also an aspect of cultural in-betweenness. Language as the inevitable part of culture, the bilingual experience could be categorized as a medium of cultural hybridity. Mukherjee writes:

My father drank scotch and read English mysteries and positively idolized Doris Day [. . .] Everything about my convent school education, our Shakespeare Society and British Council debates and Gilbert and Sullivan evenings, had trained me for one certainty; We could trust English models. (48- 49)

These lines present that how the people of West Bengal go through the cultural hybridity with their English learning. The society, school and institution product the hybrid nature of culture. As the colonized people Indian got similar hybrid culture what Mukherjee throughout *The Tree Bride* has depicted.

From each and every point, Tara Chatterjee's cultural identity is not fixed. She is in the third space of culture of cultural in-betweenness position. The text *The Tree Bride* presents owns native myths, legend heritage as a documentation of the past as the part of Indian Diaspora. By doing so, Mukherjee goes through the cultural in-betweenness and adjustment problem as other diaspora through her protagonist.

Chapter IV: Concluding Cultural Inbetweenness as Diasporic Reality

This research has aimed to trace the cultural in-betweenness and adjustment problem in Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tree Bride*. The text surrounds in India and America capturing the cultural in-betweenness of its protagonist Tara Chatterjee. Tara Chatterjee. She in search of her cultural and ancestral identity comes back in her ancient heritage Mishtigunj after her divorce in America while she feels identity crisis. Her trial back to India not only makes her aware of her ancestral heritage but also makes her aware about the cultural hybridity in her ancestry colonialism onward. She is even suffered by the dislocation and the third space of cultural Identity as mentioned by Homi K. Bhabha. It gives her the adjustment problem.

Tara Chatterjee comes back to West Bengal from San Francisco searching her fixed cultural location. In Mishtigung she is inspired by the history of her legendary great-great-aunt and namesake Tara Lata. Tara Lata was born in 1874. She had married to a tree because her fiance died at five years old. Tara Lata herself is the iconic figure of cultural and ritualistic identity of Hindu and political legend who bravely conspired to win Bengal's independence from England. With Tara Lata, the novel reveals her home Mist Mahal and the English person John Mist another iconic figure of Mishtigungj. Mishtigungj was named after his name. The story of Tara Lata and John Mist presupposes the cultural hybridity of West Bengal during colonization.

The story of Tara Lata does not give the protagonist a fixed cultural identity though it is able to leave the trace of glory of Hindu community through the history of Bengali community. In the period of her grandfather there was cultural hybridity. She finds that Mishtigungj or entire India itself is a contact zone of various cultures during colonial period. The clash of cultures in colonial period creates the

circumstance of cultural hybridity and in-betweenness in colonized nations that is depicted in the novel while the narrator unveils her cultural history.

Her family members too were influenced by British educational and administrative system and their materialistic life style. Furthermore, they have a glory of Hindu religion, myths, rituals and spiritualism. The ancestral history of protagonist Tara Chatterjee too was shaped by the cultural hybridity as revealed in the text. She in her childhood had gone to convent English school with the books of English literature. On the other hand, she had grown on highly orthodox Hindu family.

The Tree Bride reveals the story of cultural in-betweenness at different levels. In one hand, it presents the impact and influence of British culture to Indian culture in protagonist's cultural heritage. On the other hand, the protagonist herself is living in between of two cultures. She is living life in America accepting the western way of life and at the same time she is highlighting the Indian culture, myths and heritage as her true identity that makes her obliged to turn back to Mishtigunj. Bharati Mukherjee herself being a Diaspora author has raised the issue of cultural hybridity in *The Tree Bride*. Her effort to document her cultural history is also a medium to search solace from the cultural displacement in west as what the most of the diaspora people face and diaspora authors write.

Protagonist Tara Chatterjee who is shaped according to ancient Indian myths, customs, and traditions and highly influenced by the role of myths and legends on the formation of cultural identity and heritage of the people from the third world people but unfortunately she as the resident of America is obliged to adopt the western norms and cultural values. Her divorce with her husband and her forehead without sindoor are the example of the impact of westernization in her life.

She is obliged to follow the western tradition in relation with her husband though she is highly impressed by eastern marriage values, the smooth relationship with couples when marriage is designed in heaven she is unable to apply in her own life. In this regard, she is in the position of cultural in- betweenens. She is neither pure Indian nor American. Her position is what the diaspora people bear and the subject matter of the text is what the diaspora author chooses.

Tara Chatterjee's cultural identity is not fixed. She is in the third or in-betweenness position. The text *The Tree Bride* presents native myths, legend heritage as a as the documentation of past as the part of Indian Diaspora as mentioned by VijayaMishra. By doing so, Mukherjee goes through the cultural in-betweenness and adjustment problem.

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