

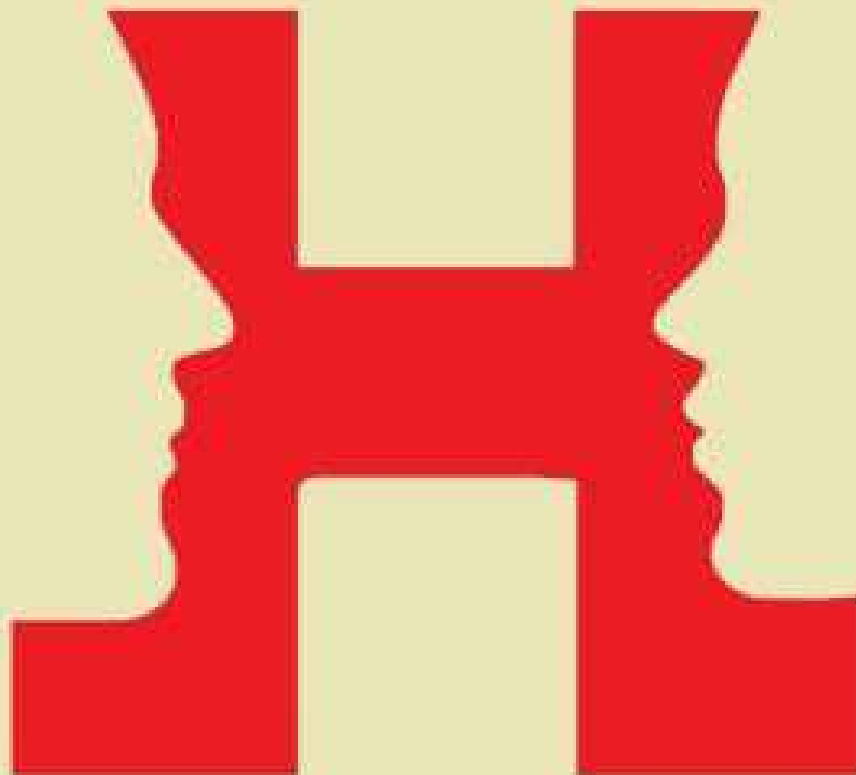
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3.**ALIENATION IN ROHINTON MISTRY'S 'SQUATTER'****Someshwar Wasekar**

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Abstract:

With the rule of the British raj in India, the new organizations, institutions and new opportunities were introduced to the Indians. Hence, Indian English Literature was flourished during this period, which gave opportunity to the Indians to exemplify their emotional, political, social and cultural voice. Since its birth, the Indian poets, dramatists, essay writers, novelists became succeeded in exploring Indian reality, aspirations and frustrations imaginatively before the indigenous people of India. When these people migrated to the other countries, they felt alienated in the foreign land. Alienation is the most significant issue that can be seen in the writings of many Indian writers including Rohinton Mistry and Deng. Alienation is the state where the people understand that they are different and not associate with particular group or people, such circumstance is described as Alienation.

Key words: Nationalist, alienation, migration, biases, othering

Introduction:

The rise of the Nationalist consciousness in Indian context has been perceived traditionally in terms of the growth of Nationalist consciousness in India, has been traditionally clarified in terms of Indians reaction to the British Government during the British Raj in India. With the rule of the British raj in India, the new organizations, institutions and new opportunities were introduced to the Indians. Hence, Indian English Literature was flourished during this period, which gave opportunity to the Indians to exemplify their emotional, political, social and cultural voice. It played a very significant role to give voice to the voiceless. Since its birth, the Indian poets, dramatists, essay writers, novelists became succeeded in exploring Indian reality, aspirations and frustrations imaginatively before the indigenous people of India. So, it created Nationalism in the Indian people. English Literature has a very universal value in the context of World Literature. The Oxford English Literature has well-defined Nationalists as,

“Identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.”¹

Alienation is the most significant issue that can be seen in the writings of Rohinton Mistry and Deng. Where the peoples understand that they are different and not associate with particular group or people, such circumstance is described as Alienation. In alienation, one find himself separated from the other. Alienation makes impact on various aspects of life. It can be seen in the large cities, in case of migration where people migrate from one place to another place or one country to another country. So, it paves

way to inequalities in the society. Now- a -days people have become practical and have lost the compassion for people. Alienation is the result of the lack of compassion for people.

The term alienation is most commonly seen in the writings of Indian and African writers, and most probably in the writings of migrant authors. In real sense, they represent their characters' alienation in their works as they feel in the society. So, their writings are nothing but the reflection of the emotions, they felt in the social norms. Hence, Othering, Marginalization and biases make these characters isolated from the society as it results in distancing.

On National and International level, minorities are treated as susceptible so that it leads to estrangement and othering. The people of Dinka and Parsis both felt such experiences in their localities. Alongside, these communities felt alienated from their ancestral cultures and tongues. In this regards, Amit Saha aptly comments in his article, *Exile Literature and the Diasporic Indian Writer* :

"Physical mobility often heightens the spiritual or psychological sense of alienation from the places one continually moves between.... In such a situation, one cannot help but feel like an outsider" (187).²

Sharmani Gabriel aptly comments in her article, *"Interrogating Multiculturalism Double Diaspora, Nation, and Re-Narration in Rohinton Mistry's Canadian Tales"*, she thinks that, diasporic writers delineates their alienation as she says that:

Mistry, as a Canadian of Parsi ethnicity, has experienced national exclusion not only in Canada but also in his Indian homeland. One of the characters in Mistry's short story collection, for example, draws connections between his experiences of racial victimization as an Indian immigrant in Toronto and the bullying and other forms of discrimination he experienced in school in Bombay because he was a Parsi. (28)³

Through this article, the main focus will be given on alienation in the short story 'Squatter'. To make this purpose fulfill, the *Tales from Firozsha Baag* will be taken into consideration for the study.

The *Tales from Firozsha Baag* was first published in 1987 as *Swimming Lessons and Other Stories*. Later on, this short story collection was re-published under the title name *Tales from Firozsha Baag*. In this book, there are eleven short stories in which one can find Bombay as local and Firozsha Baag as residence building. This collection of stories repeatedly highlights the memories of Rohinton Mistry as he himself was associated with it. After reading this short story collection of eleven stories, one can understand that these stories are interconnected with each other so it seems like novel too.

Mistry's short story collection *Tales from Firozsha Baag's* three stories explain the Parsi's identity before going to Canada. Through the short story collection, Rohinton Mistry highlights the alienation or isolation that affected the Parsi Community the most. His stories are the best examination of alienation in the scenes of diaspora writings. Some of his short stories focus on how the Indians are felt different in Canada and how they are alienated in Canada and feel dislocated in the other counties. All these issues are very clearly explained through the protagonists of the stories. In his stories, Rohinton Mistry

has describes how the lives of migrated people are intertwined with the memories of old nation they left behind and the local in which they live in.

In the short story, '*Squatter*' Rohinton Mistry has introduced a character Savuksha, he is a cricketer from the Parsi community who defeats the English team in the cricket match. Though the story seems different to what Mistry tries to explain. Mistry wants to tell that Parsis can be succeed in one way as Savuksha. But in the character of Sarosh, the main protagonist of the story, becomes failure due to alienation in the Western society i.e. in Canadian Society. Mistry highlighted that the Parsis are facing difficulties in the Canada. It shows that though the Parsis might be successful in their careers but still they will be treated with disrespected due to their identity. Mistry has delineated all the aspects of life in a very funny manner as Peter Morey aptly remarks,

"The use of defecation difficulties as a metaphor for the failure of cultural assimilation is typical of Mistry's writing, where the body often becomes a site for the exploration of social issues and anxieties" (53-54).⁵

Sarosh, the protagonist of the story declares to his relatives and friends that if he couldn't become Canadian within a period of ten years, he will leave Canada. We find Sarosh as depressed and miserable as he couldn't find himself fit in the Canadian culture. The narrator of the story, Nariman Hansotia remarks :

".....Sarosh had been living in Toronto for ten years. We find him depressed and miserable, perched on top of the toilet, crouching on his haunches, feet planted firmly for balance upon the white plastic oval of the toilet seat." (Tales from Firozsha Baag 185)

Sarosh espouses the Canadian identity and changes his name as 'Sid'. Sarosh makes adjustment and tries to become a stable Canadian. While accepting the foreign culture, he himself becomes alienated from the Indian culture in the course of time. He does everything to possess the Canadian identity but he fails, though he does not give up the hope. His manager also makes complaints against him. His Coworkers also do not give him respect. Sarosh makes every attempt to keep all the issues top secret from his fellows. Mistry delineated the story of Sarosh using a public lavatory. Mistry wants to tell that there are certain things which cannot be hide from the others:

The world of washrooms is private and at the same time very public. The absence offset below the stall door, the smell of faeces, the rustle of paper, glimpses caught through the narrow crack between the stall door and jamb-all these added up to only one thing: a foreign 205 presence in the stall, not doing things in the conventional way. {Tales from Firozsha Baag .188)

Sarosh finally decides to go back to India due to his failures and the isolation as he felt in the Canada. After coming back to India, Sarosh uses Western toilets. When Sarosh returns to India His relatives arranges a grand party to welcome him. When he joins the party , he notices that many names had been changed, he noticed while drinking in the party, "Sarosh noticed that during his absence all the brand

names had changed- the labels were different and unfamiliar" (Tales from Firozsha Baag 202). Sarosh does not explain the reason for his arrival to India. He keeps it very secret. When his friend Nariman asks him to tell them about his experiences in Canada he replies, that "for some, it was good and for some, it was bad, but for me, life in the land of milk and honey was just pain in the posterior" (Tales from Firozsha Baag 202). He found that it is difficult to adjust with the Western World. Though the character of Sarosh, Rohinton Mistry has highlighted the challenges of migrants in the Western world.

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